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THE

MELANCHOLY OF STEPHEN ALLARD

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The Melancholy of Stephen Allard

A PRIVATE DIARY

EDITED BY

GARNET SMITH

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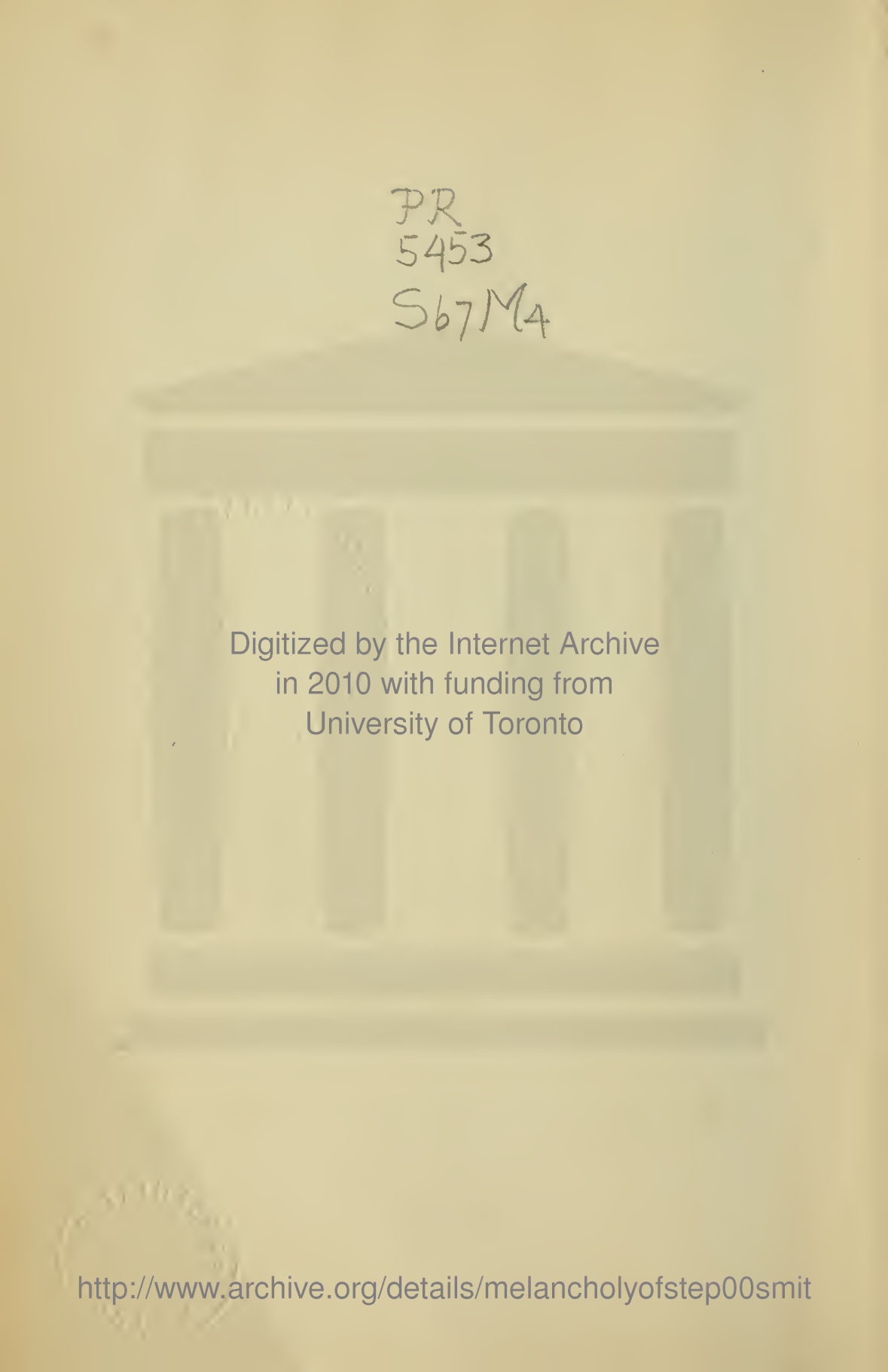

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PREFATORIAL NOTE

In publishing this private diary of a dead friend I transgress his manifest intention. My plea and, I hope, sufficient excuse must be the interest with which I have read it, and with which, possibly, others will read it. Lacking authority and special competency for the task, I have restricted my functions as editor to their narrowest limits; I have merely divided the diary into parts, and placed marginal summaries at the head of each section. I add no portrait of my friend drawn from my own recollections of his personality, no critical essay; I do not presume to offer a clue towards the better comprehension of the book, or to deduce a moral: Stephen Allard must speak for himself. I will only state that such of his acquaintances as I have consulted had little or no suspicion of his melancholy, and briefly account for the coming of the diary into my possession.

The Melancholy of Stephen Allard

I first became acquainted with Stephen Allard at Oxford. He was quiet, gentle, reserved, more ready to make music than sustain a part in conversation. An indefatigable student, he was possibly too interested in subjects that lie outside the ordinary curriculum; his copious and varied learning was known barely, if at all. With the end of our University careers, our intercourse almost ceased. We were separated by distance, and he was not a frequent correspondent. The letters I received from him were curiously impersonal; he pleasantly discussed matters suggested, but told little or nothing of his own fortunes. I could gather at most that he was in some very subordinate position and did not expect any change. He seemed to have become more retiring than ever; but I judged him versatile, and ample company to himself. About four years ago, after a brief visit to the South Coast, he enclosed in a letter some little lyrics which caused me to ask for more of the kind, and from time to time during the space of a year or so he sent me fresh instalments, but never spoke of them in the accompanying letters, though I endeavoured to make him break his silence by critical praise and censure. I now discover in these lyrics the first slender draught, as it were, of the present diary. A year and a half ago he surprised me by the information that he was

going to live in Devonshire for a year, and that he was able to do so without detriment to his fortunes. During eight months I received occasional letters from him containing agreeable descriptions of scenery and kindly inquiries. But there came a letter from the farm at which he was staying with news that my friend was dangerously ill. I was his sole correspondent, it would seem; and they had made out my address from my last letter. I arrived only to find that pneumonia had proved fatal in a few days. In his writing-desk I discovered this diary and a small sum of money, which sufficed to defray the unhappy expenses and to reward in some measure the kindly people whose care seemed to have been all that could be desired, and whose expressions of sorrow were most affecting. After inquiry, I handed over his effects to some distant relatives, and was allowed to retain his desk, the diary it contained, and the books he had brought with him.

Finally, I could wish that he should not be judged by a single phrase, or paragraph, or section. Though the method of its composition necessarily precluded anything like an organic evolution, this diary is still an orderly whole, not a collection of separate, chance entries; the same questions recur again and again, in different forms, the sections reach backwards and for-

wards, presupposing in a manner all that precedes, heralding all that succeeds. He is examining the causes and the possible remedies of his melancholy, and censure, if it must be censure, should at least be based on a careful and complete study and inter-comparison of the whole diary. He is his own critic; "lucid self-examiner," he "discovers and applies to himself all the charges that other men are like to bring against him"; he "amply scorns" himself. Perchance the reader will agree that he is not to be altogether scorned. It may even be that the "weaker brethren," instead of deploring the publication of such a book, should rather find in its very negations new ground for simple faith; while, on the other hand, those who deem themselves strong should possibly find cause to distrust their presumed strength. But I seem to see Stephen Allard preparing to criticise this last sentence of mine, and reminding me that I am in the way of infringing my declared intention to abstain from comment.

GARNET SMITH.

May 1894.

PART I

His retirement from action.

I, STEPHEN ALLARD, aged thirty, hansel my year of liberty by this first entry in the diary that is to reveal me to myself. I am come from Babylon. I have fled from Vanity Fair to take sanctuary among the hills. This bare single room is my "tower of ivory," my Pliny's retreat, my *cella pauperis*. In Imperial Rome, delicate voluptuaries and dilettante Stoics retired at times to a little room secreted in their sumptuous palaces, there to taste the joys of contrast and the sweets of feigned poverty. But here is no make-believe; this is in all truth a *cella pauperis*, this bare farmhouse chamber that is to be mine for a year of days and nights. A table, a chair, a little bed, a few shelves roughly joined to hold my books. Most of them, indeed, dead weight of erudition, monuments of my past curiosities, sometime treasures though they were, and won at the cost of many privations, I have left behind. But I am rich in the very lacking of undesired superfluities, for these books that I have brought with me resume the wisdom of the ages. These are my teachers and friends, these are the typical

sages of humanity and the golden-voiced high priests of melancholy. Through the window I descry the wooded hills, fair even now in wintry desolation. And with the spring, roses and honeysuckle will trail across my casement, and the deep-lying orchard beneath will laugh with its rosy snow of bloom, and the feathered choristers will wake me with morning music. No longer shall I need to mute the strings of my violin as heretofore, lest the sound penetrate thin partitions and disturb my work-worn, town-dwelling neighbours. I will bear it with me to the woods, *verum secretumque μουσεῖον*, or to the quiet hills, and there, seated on a knoll, mock Raphael's Apollo—doubtless with silly sheep for attendant nymphs. . . . Oh! to lie in the chequered shade on the marge of summer woods, and listen to the hum of insects, children of the Sun. To breast the autumn breezes on the purple moors! . . . But then comes sad winter once again, and my year will be a-dying, my year of liberty. In the months of flowers and birds, shall I live all too nonchalant, too much in harmony with the hours of placid peace? Ere then, at least, I shall have striven to obey the golden-lettered Delphic precept, hearkening in the night-watches to the mournful music of the wind among the shivering trees, seeking to know myself, to read my destiny in the glow of the embers. Destiny? . . . Providence? . . . two aspects of the same mystery. . . . Chance? —still another name, less august, which the ignorance of man employs to express those unexpected issues, those so-called accidents that seem too trivial for Destiny to be invoked as their cause,—as though aught were trivial, or human measures of great or less were other than human and relative. . . . Submission, in any case: for

struggle is but agitated submission ; the needle wavers, but wavers to the pole. Submission, final word of human wisdom ; for all submit, and must submit—oriental fatalists, in slavish resignation ; Stoics, in paradoxical serenity ; Epicureans disillusioned, artful once to snatch delight, in weary indifference ; Christians, confident in the guidance of a loving hand, in cheerful acquiescence. . . . Nay, I will not wander to-night in distress on the borders of the darkness that bounds the narrow realm of the human intellect. This first evening of freedom, long desired, almost unhoped, shall be consecrated to peace and joy, such joy as the shipwrecked sailor must feel when he has reached the strand of some isle of spring. In his joy, he thinks not of what the future veils, nor will I.

The causes of his retirement.

I have fled to Nature for consolation. But such flight is mainly cowardice if more be sought than recreation of energy, than restful change of habit and scene. Prolonged communion with Nature deepens melancholy, unless one be a Wordsworth, self-centred, invulnerable in lofty egoism ; for the consciousness of estrangement fails not to awake ; we come to realise acutely that there is a gulf between unhappy man and impassive Nature, that, if we are her children, we are yet inevitably her foes.

I have come hither to rediscover, if may be, my personality, that personality which seems almost dissolved into a series of impressions, emotions, and reflections, devoid of unity ; to discern, if possible, an aim in my life, in universal life ; to reason out a faith. But self-analysis presupposes and aggravates disease. Can I regain simplicity by self-analysis ? Is self-

knowledge possible ; and, if possible, desirable ? And in what can reason avail me ? By reasoning I should at most comprehend the incomprehensibility of all problems, from those of God, Immortality, Freedom, downwards, and the necessity of "sceptical solutions of sceptical doubts." To lift the veil of Isis, of Mâya, to discover that anthropomorphical, teleological, moral conceptions are necessary, and withal illusions—— !

I fled hither, when flight was first possible, that I might read clear in my heart, and decide how I shall bear myself in this prosaic, mysterious world. And let me ever remember that this year of liberty and leisure for calm thought is due to a slender legacy that entered not, and could not enter, into my calculations. Have I exercised the wisdom of the serpent, of the prudent man of the world, in thus employing it ? I sought no counsel ; for he that is proud in indigence must cherish isolation. He can give no joy, and must make shift to congratulate himself that he is virtuous, if but negatively virtuous, that his life is hidden, and of consequence to none. I have abandoned the trivial post and scanty pay of which, it would seem, I was worthy ; and the little sum of my legacy will be absorbed in the charges of my sojourn here. But, when the time comes that I must needs re-enter the world, I cannot surely fare worse than I have already done these last six years. By my flight I am a benefactor of society, to the extent of one year's salary ; for who can occupy a post in this world without depriving another of it, however little, or however much it be coveted ? Yet I must needs re-enter the world. Is action possible for me, other than the nightmare action of these past years ? Sordid, unavailing, the very contradiction of

that happiness which Aristotle, Goethe, and their kin consider the true aim of life. Harmonious development of self, the strenuous realisation and perfection of innate capabilities, without haste, yet without rest, through life! A very satire of my condition. And the joy that crowns perfect action, the joy of free, spontaneous, appropriate action! Harmonious balance of self and environment! . . . I was but a modern slave; free to do that which I must; free, at most, in my wearied hours of leisure, with the æsthetic freedom of Schopenhauer. But I am a man of the resolute North, and know that freedom, if an illusion, is a necessary illusion. I must, and will struggle with destiny; for that is heroism, and heroism laughs at fate. . . . Nay, heroic virtue is devotion to others. But in the poverty which was, which will be mine to the end, such devotion was, and will be prevented. Devotion to ideas, then? for that also is heroic virtue. But ideas are ever antagonistic; "all things are double one against another," says Ecclesiastes. The partisan is necessarily narrow-minded; at best a tragic hero, fitted for the dramatist; even then a subject for the humorist's pitiful smile. . . . Would that I might live and die in this sweet solitude, a contemplative quietist! But it cannot be. . . .

An attempt at self-portraiture.

It is due to self-respect, it is merest politeness, not to obtrude one's personality on others, and least of all to speak of one's miseries, material, bodily, or mental. Even here and now, in solitude, I shrink from confession, though it be but to myself. But is it pride that makes me tongue-tied; do I fear to incur self-condemnation; do I fondly cling to the flattering belief that I merit a

better lot, that I am humiliated by destiny? Surely, to dwell on self is hateful; yet I must "know" myself, and self-analysis is the sole method of such knowledge.

Externally, then, my life readily divides itself into two halves. Till the age of twenty-four I was a "poor scholar," in Mediæval phrase, and, in accordance with present usage, free from material care. I was absorbed in my passion for comprehension, and left the future—to be the future till such time as it should be the present. So far, the world had shown itself ready to smooth the path of knowledge before me; it could not fail to recognise merit and conduct when the hour for entering on practical life should have come. . . . But perchance, after all, I was not greatly surprised to find for how little the scholar counted in the world of men, when the gates of his University were finally closed upon him. Within, there had been kindly smiles and gracious encouragements; without, I was but one more among the feverish suitors for place. Society (let me personify for once) seemed to say: "We have done well by you; how comes it, then, that you need a place in the world? We have showered our gifts on you, and yet you present yourself for further favours; you must needs wish to intrude—where intrusion is impossible. Do you not know that all posts are filled? And, for such vacancies as occur, have we not eager relatives, friends, dependants?" Yet I was not greatly surprised. He is a fool who requires to be taught by experience, as Plato would say.

This divination of coming material ill was clearly due to the development of that inner life, which I cannot resume so briefly as my external fortunes. My native melancholy, hidden from me by my boyish

energy and eagerness for knowledge, gracious and dreamy in the rustic solitude and summer holidays that crowned my boyish toil and success, developed itself in the days of the University. Long before I was flung on the indifferent world, knowledge had turned to sorrow. I had learned to doubt. Nay, I did not learn ; doubt was as a natural development, a necessary phase of my ardent zeal for comprehension. Yet, by my birth, I was heir of generations that had doubted not, that had taken life as it came with its joys and sorrows, that knew not Isis was veiled, and knowing, would not have cared or dared to lift her veil. And these simple, strong-hearted, single-minded generations struggled stubbornly within me against the legionaries of Doubt. It was a dolorous internecine strife between heart and head. Even now I hesitate to think of those days and nights of agony, the while the spiritual forces clashed in confused contention. Even now these combats are renewed in ghostly fashion during sleep, and I wake in the cold sweats of anguish, wake to rejoice that those years are past. . . . At length, from very weariness, a truce ensued. Had not others made their peace with the enemy, and even called him friend? . . . And I turned to consider the life of the men about me. Had I not been long mad, thus absorbed in questions that should be delayed till I had won some footing in this strange world, and conquered leisure for such thoughts? I could not fail to observe the one ambition that reigned in the University. Was it not meet that I also should train ascetically till success allowed elegant dilettante ease, slay competitors without remorse, and take unctuous credit to myself that I was fittest, forsooth because I had survived? But I was no longer able, as

these, to press forward to the goal, with never a truant excursion from the way, with never a doubt. At times, indeed, I sought to silence my troubled, chaotic heart, and essayed to gird myself up for the appointed race that I could not but despise. Often did I resolve to quit the darkling forest of Truth and Error along whose briar-strewn labyrinthine ways I toiled, to fling hurried answers to the grim importunate sphinxes, should they oppose departure, or mock them in turn with scornful enigmas of my own posing. And once the forest quitted, and the wonted arena gained, my eyes should never swerve from the prize to be won ; I would re-act my boyhood and claim garlands of victory in proud consciousness of superior knowledge, with never a thought that my success meant others' loss. . . . It could not be. Heart and head refused to postpone their spiritual problems till the problem of material success should be solved. Doubt rose to bar my passage, and won its last fell victory. Doubting all, I ended in doubt of self. What wonder if I sank exhausted, outworn, ere the prize was reached ?

The same, continued.

Let me proceed to my six latest years. But, first, I should duly take into account my innate complexity. Viewed as a whole, indeed, my life seems a troubled yet constant quest for Knowledge and Truth. Yet there was that in me which, if developed, would have made a "general artist," as Fuller terms it. As Botticelli sacrificed half his art to follow Savonarola, so I, in humble fashion, offered up my store, such as it was, of partially-developed faculties at the shrine of Wisdom, guarded myself from all undue practice of what Goethe calls "half-talents." Nature had set two souls within

me ; but the artist voluntarily died that his brother, the scholar, might live. I judged with Plato that the philosophic life was the life of the god-like on earth. I made my "choice of Hercules" ; even in boyhood I was sure that while the artist, if he would be worthy of the name, must live from the first amid fair and appropriate surroundings, must possess that sufficiency of external goods which allows of free development, the scholar is less dependent on happy environment. Victory for the artist, you say, in spite of difficulties ! Genius not to be repressed ! Possibly ; but the artist, thus victorious, ever bears the mark of early constraint. He is as a tree that has been warped, and can never be as that shapely palm of Delos, untrammelled in its growth, which Ulysses knew. And further, the potential artist—I counted not, nor count, the musician in me—was one who could not promptly have gained popular suffrage, and glory coined in ready gold. But had I genius? That I could ask the question was sufficient proof to the contrary ; for the veritable artist stays not to question, but bodies forth his imperative visions. Genius is largely unconscious ; self-analysis imports an incapacity of creation. Be this as it may, the two natures within me inevitably warred together. I could not long breathe on the arid heights of philosophy, a "spectator of all time and existence"—spectator, moreover, rid of eyes and ears, if I was to fulfil Plato's requirements—without yearning for the gracious sights and sounds of the sunlit, laughing plain. Nor yet could I rest contented in the plain ; I must needs aloft to the regions where "The Mothers" dwelt, guardians of the unembodied types of which the fair forms of the plain were but shadows. . . . And now,

baffled thinker, bankrupt idealist, am I not the sport of the mirage of contrast; do I not fondly idealise the artist's life as the sole life wherein toil and delight are one? Has not the scholar who scorned to be an artist almost come to count philosophic problems as mere insoluble puzzles for grave children? Like a very Roman, is he not like to abandon the "Pure Reason" for the "Practical Reason," to seek for consolation, not for truth?

But to proceed:—Thrust upon the world, I fared —even as it was natural that I should fare. "What did Destiny purpose with me? Presumptuous question, since with most of us it purposes little," as Goethe would warn me. After all, the many of the University who may not linger in the shady colonnades fare but little better than I have done. I even marvelled that I was offered enough to enable me to live; enough, in short, to live "temperately," as Plato says in the *Laws*. Whereon the shrewd Aristotle remarks that "temperate" living may be necessitated by hardship and penury. Therefore he improves to "temperately and liberally"; which notable improvement is to be desired by me, rather than realised. However, no thought of impotent revolt entered my head; I was not surprised at my lot. I knew that the world owed me nothing, not even sustenance, and, much less, delicacies. I was not in possession of anything it cared to purchase; it concerned no one that my development was arrested. I was resigned perforce to h[illegible]overty and obscurity; easy, the former, perchance, in part[illegible]nparison with the poverty of many; welcome, almost, guara[illegible]atter. But the future was black, and my resignation calls "[illegible]tful mood, no constant temperature of the heart.

In those six years, then, which I have passed in the world, I was uninteresting to others, and consequently to myself. How could it be otherwise? Self-respect holds proportion with the respect shown by others. Latent faculties count for nothing; and these were all I had. I could point to no performance, and credit for capacity of performance was hardly to be expected. Indeed, I was too proud to sue for indulgent or doubting credit for what I might effect, had I but leisure and opportunity. I was elevated on no pedestal of wealth and position, I caught the eye of none. Lost already to others in the undistinguished crowd, I laboured to lose myself. Ignored, I sought in turn to ignore myself. Whensoever I was released from toil, I drugged consciousness of personality with the opiates of literature. I made shift to forget myself in the contemplation of the human tragi-comedy played throughout the ages. Austere philosophers lent me their aid to live in the eternal order, and rethink the thoughts of God. And when I was all too toil-worn for such abstract thinking, I ate the lotus proffered by poets, lived the lives of lovers fabled by cunning masters. By day a Stoic, nightly was I an intellectual Epicurean. . . . But though the world, past and present, was to me a "spectacle dans un fauteuil," as Alfred de Musset would say, I was altogether unhappy. Imlac, friend of Rasselas! I was *not* less unhappy than the rest because I had a mind replete with images which I could vary and combine at pleasure. I could find no "perennial" happiness, despite John Stuart Mill, in "states of feeling, and of thought coloured by feeling, under the excitement of beauty." Nay, rather, I could fain cry with Meleager: "My soul, whose

love is pain, cease, oh ! cease to joy in dream-phantoms of beauty ! "

A second attempt at self-portraiture.

But was I not in some degree more noble than I have delineated myself? If I was melancholy, this melancholy was not merely the result of adverse circumstance, of baffled selfishness. I have lived laborious days ; my heart and life have been pure. Let me essay yet once again to recall these past years. Such is the human passion for consistency, that reminiscence is ever *Dichtung* and *Wahrheit;* we read of necessity the past by the present ; unconscious artists, we make the youth the father of the man. Let me balance portrait by portrait ; haply, by comparison, I shall rightly discern that which I was and am :—A boyhood, then, of constant emulation and constant success, followed by a long moral agony and constant worldly failure. I was one of those "liberal-minded young men" of whose rarity Aristotle speaks. I duly possessed the "generous disposition" that instinctively loves all that is fair and noble and of good report. But I also perceive in this modest boy, this liberal-minded youth, a tendency towards self-effacement, a latent scorn to enter into the sphere of conflicting interests, that were to be developed, to be exaggerated, by circumstance. The school-boy was almost unconscious of his poverty, isolated voluntarily that he might lose no hour, that to the docile acquirement of prescribed knowledge he might add the cultivation of arts and studies virgin of prescription, uncontaminated by use and wont and competition. Docile as he was, he would have revolted, had he been coerced to waste his hours, as he would have said, in

playgrounds. The university youth isolated himself also. Perchance, he was too conscious of his poverty. Forsooth, fastidious artist, he pleaded to himself that his chamber was no index of his mind, and therefore not to be visited by others. But, more than this, he isolated himself that he might widen, deepen his knowledge. It seemed to him that conversation with chance acquaintances was a poor substitute for conversation with "the masters of them that know"—purblind and self-deluded masters, I now should hold, yet happy, perchance, in their presumption that they know.

With most of us the poet dies, and the man survives. And by poet I mean one who would fain make his life a poem, order his career in conformity with his knowledge of his own capacity. With me the poet is dead. I have said that, as a boy, I divined that the painter in me needed independence, needed an ample and permanent supply of "external goods." But I loved knowledge, and as this love was crowned by external success, my course seemed directed, a career lay open before me. But the youthful haunter of the University found (I realise with difficulty the vague, emotional chagrin of those days) that modern education is a mere form of business, a rude struggle for prizes. He found, and could not bear to find, that he must study for the satisfaction of others, not for his own, must equip himself with a multitude of ready, succinct answers to questions which did not interest him, must occupy and desecrate his treasure-house with all manner of cumbersome lumber which is valued in the market. Woe to the student if he dares to wander from the prescribed track, if he gives his heart to knowledge that does not "pay,"

as the phrase has it! Woe to him if he is troubled by divine questionings and haunted by the infinite, if he is wholly unable to adjourn his "mental crisis," his moral anguish, till such time as his position in the world is secured—adjourn to the Greek Calends, in a word; for, his position once secured, he is like to acquiesce in comfortable conventions. Let him strive, as I did, to serve two masters, outward Success and inward Truth, and he shall fail. Nay, did I not serve the latter only too well, and at the cost of the other? And, as a bankrupt idealist, I inevitably, fondly desire that I had followed the contrary course. But such regrets, such "had-I-wist," is the merest lesson of Greek, nay all tragedies. And does not the old scorn survive? Strange that the object of scorn can still be desired! Ah well, happy is he who is so dowered with the worldly goods which allow freedom that he may follow the path of natural development, though it lead away from the miry arena! But they who are so dowered with the material of freedom almost ever seem unworthy of the gift.

On failure followed resolute endeavour, renewed and ever renewed in spite, in defiance of constant monotonous failure. Failures that, at length, could not surprise; nay, with success, I should have been surprised into a Phocion-like "what have I done amiss, that I should win applause?" Keenest incentive had I to noble endeavour, to self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness. For my parents' sake I sank my pride and dignity and fronted defeat, entered into collision with interests that were stronger than my own. Ardent was my hope to cheer them,—and they died uncheered.

A youth, then, of innate nobleness and generosity,—

I can let pass this vaunt, for my youth is gone, for he that was I is dead. A moral, mental crisis supervenes, changing simplicity to complexity. Four years of ineffectual effort to win the means to cheer my nearest and dearest. Finally, complete isolation: I "drudged" by day, with Stoic endurance, for my "outer covering," toiled that I might eat and "make misfortune live"; I fleeted the hours of leisure in Epicurean contemplation.

I swerved not from my old unreasoned habitude of goodness, but my heart grew cold in these two latest years. I sank to the apathy and indifference of the sage. I came to accept facts—"Facts still are facts, resent them as you may," says Euripides; I saw the world as it was, and recognised unpalatableness as the criterion of truth—that was true which was the least ideal, the most contrary to the postulates of the heart. It was vain to take sanctuary in the mind, for reason turned inevitably to scepticism. I fared no better if I sought to escape my own narrow personality: the vision of the world which I evoked from the pages of scientists was a nightmare phantasmagoria of the endless, fatal metamorphoses of mechanical or unconsciously artistic force; the vision of human thought and action which I evoked from histories of philosophy and philosophies of history chilled me through and through. Even æsthetic contemplation was marred, for the remembrance of the real inevitably obtruded, and beauty shrank to a specious lie. The generous disposition, "bestowed by divine agency upon the truly fortunate," was clouded. Gone was the poetry of my early youth, its candid simplicity, its calm trust that to him who merits and waits in patience all things accrue. Experience had done its work.

The strife of poetry and philosophy.

I am weather-bound, and all day, in place of stern converse with my sages, I have listened solely to my poets of melancholy. Should I ascribe to weakness of intellect this love of mine for the singers of melancholy, to undue predominance of heart over head, to mere lack of vitality? . . . How often in the days of the University, after a long upward flight into the Empyrean, after mounting to the regions where the Ideas, divested of fair human drapery, reveal themselves but as algebraical formulæ, have I sunk back dazed, blinded with excess of light, a Phæthon humiliated after mad presumption, a Vulcan flung to earth from the banquet of the gods, limping and smarting from his fall! Or was I as the lark that returns in timid joy to its lowly nest on the bosomed earth? Was I a mere intrusive poet or painter that must decline to the level of his art, decline from the One to the Many, from the world of Ideas to the world of Sense,—a poet who sang not, a painter who painted not? . . . I would clutch some object on my table, rejoicing in the form and colour and substance that had been abstracted there aloft, and rest my grateful eyes on some flower, some branch of red hawthorn, pilfered to set in a simple jar of turquoise blue, some golden chrysanthemum or twig of holly, rich in varnished sombre green and berries of coral that glowed in the soft light of shaded lamp. An exile from the Heaven of Ideas, but exiled as from some Italian community of mediæval days, exiled, and therefore free to resume the personal will that was necessarily abdicated within the city bounds, free from the turmoil and strife of parties,—free also to languish in poverty as a fuoriscito was free. But not long, and I yearned to return to the City of Philosophy, and wandered about the

walls, seeking entrance. Fierce was the strife of opposing ideas within,—no haven of peace, this City of Philosophy,—and entrance won, I yearned again for exile speedily.

I sought knowledge, and yet desired that knowledge should be tinged with emotion, humanised. Even now, like a child, I crave myths and allegories, images clothed in sense, and not cold, shapeless, colourless Ideas. And thus my chosen brethren are the poets of melancholy, poets in prose and verse. I dare to call them brethren ; in that they are dead, they disclaim not my company. But of these poets there is an inner circle of the humble and sincere who are most my brethren. They of the outer circle were wont to pose before the gaping multitude which repaid their lofty scorn with adulatory acclamations. Insensate victims of mad selfishness, fanatics of insatiate egoism, they scorched both hands before the fire of life ; they drained the brimming cup, and then complained of its bitterness. They demanded more than life can give, and railed in impotent revolt. But these passed in life almost unknown, sadly conscious of their inability to tread the common ways, and died ere fame could visit them. Fame ? If I were logical, I should seek an inmost circle, and claim for truest brethren those whom fame visited not in life or death. There are saints conspicuous, named and famed ; but the numberless, nameless throng of All Saints also have their festival. Sweetest, perchance, are the melodies unheard, and sweetest the poems that were only dreamt, that were never prisoned in shape ; sweetest also the poem-lives that passed unmarked.

But I will no longer continue as heretofore in the nightly hours of my Epicurean leisure to read in the

glow of fire and lamp some page of these my chosen poets of melancholy, poets in verse or prose, and then allow its influence to widen and disperse in reverie, like the agitation of a pebble-ruffled pool. Nor will I wander forth by day, now that I am free, with book in hand, wholly content to hearken to the music of these my brethren, and then gaze vaguely on the meads and woods, as one that has heard a symphony, and is still beneath a spirit-spell. For I am here to wrestle with the problem of destiny; haply, by drawing their melancholy to a focus, I shall better comprehend my own. It is true that kindred natures meet with different destinies, and that the fashion of melancholy varies with the fashion of fortune. And more than this, personality is a clear-obscure; we know not ourselves, and are not known to others. But these, illustrious brethren of one wholly obscure and inarticulate, were gifted to express, if not the whole secret of their personalities, at least their sorrows; let me, then, read mine by the light of theirs. Thus, indeed, I shall be essaying that homœopathic remedy of which the Stagirite enigmatically spoke. And it may be that, comprehending their melancholy and mine, I shall be roused to reaction, roused to a healthy scorn of melancholy.

The poets of Melancholy: Maurice de Guérin.

It may be that Maurice de Guérin is a "child of the century," a victim of self-analysis, of morbid egoism. But his melancholy, his egoism, is not of the grandiose, theatrical order; on the contrary, he voluntarily effaces himself and desires obscurity. Extreme in self-depreciation, he cannot bear that his friends should value him at more than his own valua-

tion ; he would have them remember that, sounding the depths of his personality, he can discover no faculty worthy or capable of development, no vital germ of will and energy. In so far, he is a brother of Obermann ; but, unlike his elder brother, he is not dead to desire, not calm because completely conscious of his helplessness and hopelessness. He would fain act, and bear himself as a man in the world,—but he is timid, refined, incapable of sanguine self-assertion and rude combat. He would fain love,—but how can he expect that he should be loved, or even pitied ? Thrust back upon himself, he laments in low-toned, unheard monodies that his life is nothing more than an alternation of brief efforts and long exhaustions, of ardent dreams and chill awakenings. Enthusiasm and discouragement succeed each other in the void ; for he is shouldered aside from the press of men, he has no position in the world, and cannot even discover the *rôle* he is called upon to play. Resolution is forced on him by circumstance ; yet of what use to resolve, since he cannot count on energy to execute his resolve. He clings to those whom he deems to be stronger than himself. He is willing, eager that others shall decide for him, and obediently joins the little band of theological students which Lamennais gathered round him in his Brittany retreat of La Chênaie before his final rupture with Rome. By his choice, by his ratification of the choice made for him of a priestly career, he trusts, with many a misgiving, that he may reconcile and equally satisfy the contrary desires for action and contemplation that war within him ; and bows to discipline, in vain hope that prolonged habitude will in time conform his inner to his outward life. But

no shadow of "vocation" is he able to discern; he languishes in his cloister life, and "has need of the open air," poet as he is, and therefore pantheist more or less unconsciously. The qualities which his master could desire in him are not his; he passes uncomprehended, unvalued by master and comrades alike. At most he takes courage to interchange with friends the familiar, pedestrian verses which he fashions in mistaken application of "Lakist" theories, confiding all that was truly personal and rare to his diary and chance letters. Timidly chafing against fixed, monastic rules, timidly resisting the influence of his strenuous, passionate master, he is released at length by the breaking up of the little community; is free to fling himself into the whirlpool of that Paris which dismays and fascinates him in the anticipation. Free to be prisoned in obscurity, free to fail in the attempt to secure a livelihood and succour his nearest and dearest by chance articles in struggling reviews and scantily-recompensed labours of tuition which preclude all leisure for thought. But is he not incapable of logical, abstract thought, he asks himself? is not such thought as he can think self-torture merely? If only, by self-sacrifice, by moulding himself to the fashion of the world, he could attain and fill some modest sphere of duty!

Solicited by desires of action, by the mirage of contrast, his paramount desire is yet for the quietistic, country life. Dolorously striving to accommodate himself to the ways of social toil, he cannot refrain from desiring release from bondage, from recalling the charm of rural solitude, which charm is past definition, which yet he endeavours to define as "a combination, an

inmost fusion of the broadest sentiment of liberty and the impressions of natural beauties." In that all too brief breathing-space of his at Val d'Arguenon, home of his friend, that interval of peace between his hapless struggles at La Chênaie and in Paris, "this fusion of the calm impressions of nature with the stormy reveries of my heart brought about a condition of mind that I would fain prolong as the fittest for a dreamer like me. It is, as it were, a temperate, calm ecstasy which ravishes the soul out of itself without removing the consciousness of a permanent, somewhat stormy sadness. Moreover, in this frame of mind, one is gradually permeated with a languor that tempers the vivacity of the intellectual faculties, and lulls the heart into a semi-slumber void of thought and yet permitting the fairest dreams." Would that it had been his to have prolonged his sojourn and his dreams, and recounted them as he knew well to recount, amply, fluently! But this nature-remedy is all dubious. The vision of Nature is subjective, and moods are transitory, swiftly changing from joy to pain. Enthusiasm is a fire that spends itself the sooner that it is intense; he that is sensitive is prone to melancholy in proportion to his sensitiveness. The victim of melancholy delves in his own heart, and stirs up pestilential vapours. He vainly seeks to die to himself that he may live in Nature. Not only must he wonder, with Maurice de Guérin, "how comes it that my rest is disturbed by the state of the air, that the peace of my soul is thus abandoned to the caprice of the winds?" but he must also find himself again and again, and for long periods, wholly inaccessible to external impressions, or cast into deepest despondency by the consciousness of

the contrast between the disquiet of his heart and the calm of Nature. Another step, and he will come to fear and hate, like Lamartine or Lenau, its impassibility.

Of the last brief period of his short life we know next to nothing. He is said to have overcome his timidity and irresolution. Fortune seemed to smile; there is a marriage which releases him from penury. "Thanks to this delightful freak of fate, my life will henceforth be more uniform, and I shall find at length that leisure I have craved so long." . . . In less than a year he has fallen into a consumption, and has died before the completion of his thirtieth summer. . . .

Was there a radical change of character and creed in his last years? Had Maurice the melancholy, the writer of the *Journal*, died that Maurice the artist, the writer of the *Centaur*, might live? Had he definitely overcome the malady of introspection, won his way from the morbid disquiet of melancholy to the sane serenity of art? Would the *Centaur* have been followed by worthy successors, or had he given us all that it was in his power to give? In default of documents, confident answer is impossible. The posthumous publication of the *Centaur* provoked admiration of its pantheistic spirit; his relatives and friends, distressed to learn that he is eulogised as being more truly Greek than André Chénier himself, maintained that his childhood's faith, if abandoned at all, was abandoned only for a brief season, and pointed to the retractions made after he was brought home to die, to his piety and Christian end. To be an artist, to write a Centaur after a visit to the Greek antiquities in the Louvre, is not necessarily to be a "great pagan" like Goethe; pantheism is an inevitable element of

poetry, and Wordsworth scruples not to be a poet, a pantheist. Maurice was timid throughout, sure of his mental incapacity to deal with final problems, convinced of "the impenetrability of destiny"; dying, why should he reject proffered consolation, and cause chagrin to his friends? But his friends publish few letters of his later years in Paris, and omit those which George Sand published, with their marks of a reaction from asceticism. Similar doubts present themselves against any assumption that, in his later years, his character was largely changed, that he became reconciled to life, that he turned from the vague to the positive and practical. His early lack of will, his inability to act, resulted from the activity of thought, from the equilibrium of opposite tendencies; yet, constrained by the stern necessity of winning daily bread, he found that it is possible, that there is strength forthcoming to duly execute taskwork. But melancholy will remain, though it be expressed less often. There are brave words, magnanimous expressions of disdain of his past melancholy, to be found in his latest letters, but these cannot accurately be taken as representing a permanent state of mind, any more than the courageous phrases with which Keats met ill-fortune. It is not a question of sincerity. He, and Keats, and their like, are writing or conversing with friends who naturally delight in such intimations of courage. They desire to be even as their friends would have them be; they hope to become permanently that which, in moods of reaction, they believe themselves in the way of becoming. In these very letters which are adduced in proof of the change in his character melancholy finds as poignant expression as ever in the earlier, wholly melancholy *Journal;* he points out in

these days of supposed reconciliation with the world that he is understating his melancholy as he overstated it in the old days. But what of his ill-health, that ill-health which was apparently intermittent, which developed dangerously only when fortune had begun to smile upon him? There are those who confidently, crudely attribute melancholy to deficient vitality, as they attribute hypochondria to dyspepsia, and weakness of will to weakness of body. Why should they not proceed further, and maintain that he was melancholy, that he clung to his troubled faith, that he was sick of mind, just so long as he was sick of body; and that he was serenely pagan, practical, artistic, just so long as he was sane of body. But this would be to forget the melancholy of paganism, of art, and of strength; and it would be equally reasonable, more reasonable, to maintain that his melancholy was connate, and aggravated at most by weakness of frame and adverse circumstance, that he was an artist in virtue of his melancholy. The melancholy writer of the *Journal*, the emotional landscapist, with his keen perception of moral symbolism in nature, his Aryan, spontaneous power of personification, is at least an artist as rare as the writer of the *Centaur*, the recorder of the aged Centaur's regretful, melancholy recollections of his puissant, impressible youth. Doubtless, the change in Maurice de Guérin, such as it was, was due to added years. With most of us the poet dies, and the man survives. In some few cases the poet, if he be articulate, makes shift to survive; but he too must learn to regard his dreams as dreams only, to expect no confirmation of them, to smile ironically at his own idealism, his visionary land of Faëry, as, at most, a

"Sweet inn from pain and wearisome turmoil." The world is what it is, and he who, in youth, disdains to pursue the wonted paths that lead to worldly success, or is debarred from pursuit by adverse chance, is dedicated to soul-consuming poverty and melancholy solitude.

The problem of happiness.

I ask of Maurice de Guérin what happiness may be. "The sweet, fine rain that penetrates the heart and, later, wells forth in tears." In like manner, Alfred de Musset regards as his sole wealth the memory of his tears. In like manner, again, Goethe assures that he alone knows the "Heavenly Powers" who has eaten his bread in tears. Must I, then, make shift to vaunt with Fletcher that "there's nought in this life sweet, save only melancholy," to conclude, in a word, that melancholy is happiness?

The intellectual life, indeed, and the moral life alike require that individuality shall be transcended; he whose eye is ever fixed upon himself and his own fortunes may not behold the universal order and judge impartially. But before I essay to behold "under the aspect of eternity" the eternal effort of man to compass that which goes by the name of happiness, let me cast about to consider its conditions. . . . It is best for a mortal to be in health; next best, to be fair and noble of form and nature; next, to enjoy wealth that is not ill-gotten; and the next, to be young amid youthful comrades. Such are the conditions according to Simonides, or at least some Greek whose gnomic quatrain was judged worthy of Simonides—Simonides, hedonistic pessimist, ready to express the Hellenic sentiment that not to be born is best, sure that our days are few and evil, that man's strength is slight and his cares invincible, that

life is but a round of toil and trouble, and that, therefore, it is high time to enjoy while yet enjoyment is possible. It is barely worth while to consider them in relation to myself. As to the first, indeed, long before I entered on my lonely struggle with the world, an acquaintance styled me "a hot-house plant," doubtless meaning that I could only flourish under favouring circumstances; but yet the "will-to-live," the "perseverance in being," is strong within me, that endurance and tenacity which the Greeks well knew long before they gave it a philosophical name. Fair and noble of form and nature;—one self-same word to express all this. Truly Greek, this presumed correlation between beauty of the mind and body, this instinctive belief that the beauty of the body was ample guarantee for that of the mind. And Socrates! Apollo's intelligence in the rude semblance of Silenus! Nay, he willingly confirms the presumption, and hastens to explain that his original nature fully corresponded to his ignoble form. Virgil is a modern when he makes a distinction between the merit and the graceful bearing of his Euryalus. Yet our novelists—always excepting the Russians, who care not to charm or console by presentations of ideal action, ideal joys, ideal sorrows—our novelists, as artists, are naturally of the Greek belief; they insist, and must insist, on personal fascination, on charm. Desire of novelty may, indeed, lead them to an antithesis in the same person, to a Quasimodo, a Becky Sharp. If they condescend to a hero or heroine whose fairness is of mind alone, they still insist, and must insist, that inner fairness is revealed in expression, and that there are those who are capable of appreciating this revelation. It may be so, for we moderns not only sacrifice the form to

the face, but the face to the expression. The sense of beauty is become rare ; we are either too spiritual, or, more commonly, too vulgar and material to care for beauty. Lovers count not, for love is blind ; men and women are the sport of hidden affinities, are prompted by instinct to desire their complements ; their sole reason of choice, if reason were called for, could only be, "this man or woman pleases me," not "this man or woman is fair." And interests of Mammon supervene and counteract. If, then, you are cursed with this rare sense of beauty, and have not store of gold—how if property is theft, if there is no wealth that is not ill-gotten ? but let this pass for the moment—you are not like to joy in youth with youthful friends. Friends! But to us moderns friendship is as unknown ; we direct not our love to adolescents, as the Greeks did, holding them fairer than women both in mind and form. And yet Montaigne tells long and lovingly of his friend La Bœotie, and is almost as silent as an Athenian about his wife ; and Sir Philip Sidney was the mirror of friendship —what fairer than the simple epitaph that Sir Fulke Greville let inscribe upon his tomb : "Friend to Sir Philip Sydney" ? But even sweet Sir Philip, melancholy Sir Philip, was a modern. Friendship paled ; he loved, and loved too late, for Penelope Devereux had passed into the keeping of a "rich fool." Penelope yet gives him of her high heart the monarchy ; but guarded by "tyrant honour" is cruelly kind, kind, because cruel. At length he renounces ; he may, must, can, will, does "leave following that which it is gain to miss" ; he indites two sorrowing sonnets on Desire and Love, comparable with the twain of Shakespeare on Lust and Death, adding, as epigraph, Splendidis Longe Valedico Nugis,

—and then he marries Frances Walsingham. No song for her; and, a widow, speedily she hies to a second bond, and presently to a third. And the high-souled, virtuous Stella-Penelope sinks to the dishonoured paramour of Blount. Truly, friendship is better far than love. . . . I have loved, and love to love; I have sought and seek an object of my love. Perchance I have hidden, untouched treasures of friendship to lavish, since I dare not, will not love. But, as a boy, disinterested, enthusiastic, reserved, I cared for knowledge only, and disdained all else. A youth, I shrank humbly, proudly from the society of my fellows. Who and what was I to merit friendship? I had none of the external conditions of happiness. Externals? Who can despise them? Montaigne owns that his heart was gentlest in prosperity. So, in my pride, I remained alone, absorbed in ambition. One day, and men would welcome the friendship I proffered. And when ambition reaped no fruit, there was but still greater cause to remain alone, in voluntary isolation. From pride, from dignity, I have not loved. From pride, from dignity, I have never opened my heart to a friend. Trouble a friend, who could not be proud of me, with faltering narratives of continuous disappointments, with forlorn complaints! To be a friend is to be an equal; but I could only inspire pity. *Pars mali audire solatia*—Seneca is right; it would doubly increase my unhappiness to be the object of a condescending phrase, of a pitying glance.

The same, continued.

From Greek, let me turn to Roman testimony as to the conditions of happiness. Quintus Metellus, pronouncing a funeral eulogy two hundred years before our era, proudly maintained that his father had enjoyed

in their fulness the ten chiefest and best goods of fortune that the wise spend their lives in seeking. It is a confused list, for Quintus is hampered by his chosen number. However, this Lucius Metellus was equally successful in war and oratory, had passed through the various magistracies and proceeded at length chief of the Senate. He had acquired a vast fortune by honest means, and had left many children. In brief, he was pre-eminent in all that a primitive Roman could value. When Cicero laid down the rules of panegyric, he pointed out that the eulogist must rehearse the goods of fortune, such as birth, wealth, power, beauty, genius. If the dead man possessed these, he is to be praised for having well employed them. If he lacked them, for having wisely known how to do without them. If he lost them, for having temperately borne their loss. "If he lacked them, he is to be praised for having wisely known how to do without them." There is the moral progress; or rather, the more lucid and discriminating expression of the moral sentiment. Epictetus is ready to turn to account whatsoever circumstances may befall him; and Seneca's Demetrius will only complain of the gods that they have held his readiness to renounce and resign, his eager obedience, to need trial. In the last degree of moral refinement, we shall have the just man whom poverty and privation of the goods of fortune exposes to ridicule, who is misjudged in life, and receives no eulogy in death. Thus, happiness would be unreserved submission, renunciation complete and once for all of "distempered, discontented thoughts, vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires."

But this acceptance, not only of the conditions of general life, but of one's own life! *Non pareo Deo*,

sed assentior, I more than obey, I adhere to the will of God, wrote Seneca as a counsel of perfection. And Marcus Aurelius, mournfully serene, he at least winning credit for sincerity, accepted whatever was with a mystic optimism. "O world, whatever seems fitting to thee, seems fitting to me." But this acceptance, this continual *gratias ago*, this unfaltering thankfulness for fortune and misfortune, presupposes a nature that is inclined to acceptance, as religion can only make a man good, if he be good already. How and if the mood is fitful? You may desire, and yet be incapable of constancy in resignation, as in faith. "As for the goodness that comes by nature, it is plain that it is not within our control, but is bestowed by some divine agency on those who truly deserve to be called fortunate." So writes Aristotle, and I have but to change "goodness" into "joyful, grateful acceptance of privation." But Cicero gives expression to the other half of truth when he says that goodness is our own, *virtutem nemo unquam acceptam deo retulit*, that men thank the gods for good fortune, not for wisdom, which we must seek within ourselves. The theologian, like Aristotle, would speak of grace as a gift. The goods of fortune, at least, are gifts, though it seems impossible to discover any principle of distribution; they fall, like the rain and the sunshine, on the just and unjust alike. The suitors are many, but apparently the number of gifts to be bestowed is limited. In similar fashion, the Calvinist restricts the gifts of grace to a small minority. Moreover, as they that receive the gifts of fortune mainly misuse them, so there have been many who believed themselves in the receipt of grace, but knew not how to profit by it, or even regarded grace and

action as having nothing in common. In short, the notion of grace as a gift is implicitly immoral; the Deity is made capricious, or resolved into Necessity. . . . But to reason high of grace and fate, of will and providence, is to discourse with Milton's devils and "find no end, in wandering mazes lost." We must accept, then, submit with a *gratias agimus*, hold loose to, or scorn, all that Fortune can give or take away. Whatever is, is best. So the optimists of all ages. Spinoza's "perfection is reality," Hegel's "the real is the rational," come to the same thing: what is, is in accordance with the eternal order. But after eliminating "good" and "bad" as merely human conceptions and altogether inadequate, Spinoza goes on, "nevertheless, though this be so, the terms should still be retained. . . . By good I mean that which we certainly know to be the means of approaching more nearly to the type of human nature which we have set before ourselves; by bad, that which we certainly know to be a hindrance to us in approaching that type." The whole question is thus reopened.

Happiness! The definition, even as the thing, is not to be discovered. The extremes of hedonism and asceticism meet in despair; a Luther proclaims the vanity of all effort to compass felicity by self-perfecting asceticism, as a Solomon proclaims the vanity of all effort to pass from a lesser to a greater perfection by sensuous delights. Voluptuaries of all ages, foiled as they cannot but be foiled in the pursuit of pleasure, have declared happiness impossible of attainment. Stoics of all ages have schooled themselves to disregard it. The Christian postpones his happiness to a future state, striving the while to deserve; the Buddhist endeavours to merit a future happiness of annihilation.

Is it not folly to consider happiness at all? Increased intelligence implies increased capacity for sorrow. The sweetest happiness is merely subtlest pain; we weep for joy when joy is given. He who deems himself happy is self-deluded, and usurps the name. "We are long," said Imlac to Rasselas, "before we are convinced that happiness is never to be found, and each believes it possessed by others to keep alive the hope of obtaining it for himself." And yet it is an open secret, this impossibility of happiness. We pursue happiness indeed, for the desire of happiness is ineradicable from human nature; but happiness can hardly be realised, and, if realised, we cannot acquiesce in possession. Rousseau, desirous that mankind shall return to nature and happiness, is constrained to discover that health and imbecility are the two chief elements of happiness, and to recognise an arch-philanthropist in the Indian sage who first taught the application of cranium-compressors to newborn infants. Moralists may well cast about for another term to express the aim of human desire and endeavour. It is not a question in life of happiness, but of duty, or of approximation to perfection, they insist, thereby posing insoluble problems and exposing themselves to ever-renewed failures in the attempt to reconcile natural and moral tendencies, determination and self-determination.

Who, indeed, can dare to deem himself happy, unless he be utterly selfish and verily blind to the world around him? The spectacle of the world is like to wring from us a *non curæ deis* as from Tacitus; to compel us to infer with Newman that "either there is no Creator, or he has disowned his creatures." Perchance, as Menander and Schiller bade us remember,

we suffer no more than we deserve, and the history of the world is the judgment of the world. And yet mankind ever clings to the illusion of happiness ; the ancients tried to believe that happiness was possible for the individual here and now ; the men of the middle ages tried to believe that happiness was postponed to a future life ; the moderns, despairing alike of the ancient and mediæval creeds, try to believe that somehow the species (the individual is dropped from view) will be blessed on earth in a Golden Age that is to come.

Happiness and compensation. The poets of melancholy : Lenau.

That qualities imply defects, that possessions and posts entail proportionate cares and responsibilities are facile commonplaces. Starting with such premises, I have at times wondered if it were possible to conclude that, in a man's life, his advantages and disadvantages balance exactly. Nay, to push the paradox still further, I have speculated whether it might not be that not only is there compensation to the individual, but the balance-sheets of all men, rightly calculated, are equivalent, their fortunes equal. But the paradoxes remained paradoxes to me ; a thousand objections presented themselves—the impossibility of measuring pleasures and pains ; of defining happiness, which is conscious or unconscious, which accompanies energy and results from energy ; of co-ordinating all the elements of happiness ; of relating its various aspects, duty, love, faith, knowledge. The possible combinations, again, of fortunes and temperaments were infinite. I could strike no exact balance of compensation in the case of any individual on whose life-record I experimented, still less find equivalence between any two men's lives.

In these last days I have re-read Lenau. Should I

essay experiment on this Nicolaus Niembsch, Count of Strehlenau? . . . He is nobly born, but he is saved from the perils of high position by his comparative poverty. His father is a gamester and libertine, but he speedily departs "to his own place"; and, moreover, as proverbs aver, he is fortunate whose father is addicted to evil courses, since sons are wont to run counter to the examples of their fathers. His widowed mother, tender and pious, is devoted to her child. But such devotion is injudicious, and implies that the child shall be spoiled and become self-willed. Lenau is to be a poet, and the hereditary factors of his genius are appropriately, admirably rich and complex. He is at once a Slav, a Magyar, a German. He can express in turn the resigned melancholy of the Slav, the fiery independence of the mobile Hungarian, the earnest profundity of the philosophic German. But the gentle melancholy of the Slav is based on apathy and weak surrender to the force of circumstances; the fire and fervour of the Magyar is short-lived in proportion to its intensity, depression following hard on the heels of enthusiasm; the German—the German as he was till twenty years ago—is nebulous, unpractical. Moreover, the nature that is rich, if capable of intense joy, is also capable of intense suffering. And the nature that is complex is like to fail of that success which is reserved to the simple and single-minded. And if Lenau possessed to the highest degree the qualities of his nationalities, he similarly possessed the defects. Lenau is a poet; but, then, if the poet is ἔκφρων, mad, he is also ἔνθεος, inspired; if the poet must envy the comfortable habits of the "Philistine," he yet can vaunt that he lives more in an hour than the Philistine in a year. Lenau is confident in his poetical

powers, justly confident,—and happy is he who is even unjustly confident in his own abilities ; but then, again, he doubts the value of poetry, and sighs that he did not adopt some useful profession. "My life is a folly ; for what have I done ? written merely a few fine poems." Poetry is a safety-valve for oppressive thought and emotion ; the poet wins calm by confessing his agitation ; the confession ended, the poet is consoled. But such "vehement mental agitations" are *Höllen-stuff*, he is "a musical instrument for devils to play upon." To his gift of poetry is added that of music ; "in music lies all that is sweet," his Guarnerius is ever at hand to console. But music may act as an irritant rather than a sedative ; his nerves are strings that vibrate to the touch of the demon of melancholy. The poet is one who knows how to find peace in the contemplation of Nature ; but Lenau, poet of Nature, skilled to interpret her moods and match them with his own, discovers that her calm is but cruel monotony, that there is an impassable gulf between Nature and Man, that Man, child of Nature, is in irreconcilable conflict with her. Poetry and poverty are wont to dwell together, and the grim brother too often plays the part of Cain ; but Lenau is in possession of a sufficient competency, and therefore of freedom from material care. Fame smiles early upon him ; he is kindly, fascinating in aspect and manner, the cynosure of admiring friends, the object of feminine worship. But implacable doubt will not allow him to find joy in fame ; he saddens his friends by his waywardness, alienates his brother-poets by clear-sighted satire ; the love that he inspires in women and returns brings little but pain and finds no "earthly close."

Nay, the balance-sheet can merely be one of forced antitheses. And I am constrained to omit all consideration of his last three years of life, to regard insanity as non-existence. Collins, harassed by want and debt, can still sing with pensive purity of note; Collins, freed from material care, sickens speedily, and his brain is clouded to the end. Here is a grim compensation, at least. But Lenau, distraught to frenzy, muttering at most in moments of calm that "poor Niembsch is very unhappy," dimly compassionating himself, sinking to the level of the gibbering foul simian, object of shuddering to his friends! Unless, indeed, I decide crudely, off-hand, that he was responsible for his madness, that he brought retribution, compensation, on himself. But what of constitutional predisposition to melancholy madness? or how are the degrees of responsibility in love chagrins, in excesses of thought, to be measured? Love, it may be, is already a species of madness, a fatal visitation in itself—as the Greeks held. He early divines that his heart is incapable of happiness, that he is "governed by a gravitation towards misery," and resolves to renounce. But he is love's victim, in spite of resolve, and cannot but stretch out his hand to grasp the happiness that seems within his reach. Yet, throughout his life, his budding hopes are dashed; he ever renounces, wisely, judiciously, it may be,—and his last renunciation costs him his reason, is the occasion, if not the cause, of his madness.

Might it not, indeed, be urged that he was diseased throughout his life; insane, since his character was not in equilibrium? Act followed not on decision, for decision came too late; opportune decision was precluded by scrupulosity and doubt; if doubt could have

been resolved, will-power, the mediator between thought and act, would still have been lacking. He was sorrowfully, deeply conscious of his powerlessness to act, his inability to make right calculation in advance, to choose an end and the appropriate means to this end, to carry out such choice into execution. He was clear-sighted in the diagnosis of his case; but can the sick gain health by knowledge of their sickness? Could he be other than he was, passive, devoid of will? There is a doom on instability. He was unstable; but this was due in large measure to his devotion to truth, he passed from professional study to professional study in vain search for satisfaction. He was unstable because he loved liberty; growing distrustful of liberty, he determines not to be "exceptional," and avows his detestation of "this liberty of fools and poets," but he is unable to discover the due limits of liberty, and elect a course. Lover of political liberty, he abandons Germany for America; but, speedily discovering that forms of government have little bearing on liberty, he returns disillusioned. Lover of truth, he is led inevitably to doubt. He identifies himself in turn with his sceptical Faust, his believing Savonarola, his sceptical-believing Albigenses. Faust, in his indomitable pride, essays to follow Mephistopheles's counsel and sever himself not only from Christ but from Nature, that so he may no longer be the slave of law, of either law. He fails not to discover that the temple of godlike autonomy is a mere prison-house, that severance implies desire for union, that the completest knowledge of Nature and Self would avail him little, for Self and Nature, the Creature and the Creator, are inevitably opposed, and not to be All is to be nothing worth the being. But is not the All, the

One, a mere dream, and he himself a dream within a dream? Despairing, he dreams a dagger to his heart, vainly dreaming to have ended all strife. Faust-Lenau, weary of Pantheism and reason, turns for consolation to his childhood's faith. He has felt to the full, so he tells a friend, that there is an abyss between man and nature, and that the creature needs a mediator, lest he despair and perish; he has "driven the old pantheistic demon thither from whence he came—to the Devil." He is Savonarola now, mystic, ascetic, lowly of heart, preaching against Florentine neo-paganism and German transcendentalism, martyr of faith and liberty. But despite himself, he has given the fairer argument to Savonarola's opponent, Mariano, missionary of neo-paganism and the pope, and ere long he is singing of the Albigenses, martyrs they also of liberty and faith, martyrs of "free thought," dying to maintain their creed that man has one life only, dualists, Manichæans, or if not Manichæans, forerunners of that Joachimite and Franciscan "Eternal Gospel" which proclaimed the advent of the third and final dispensation when men shall be "knights of the Holy Ghost," and humanity shall be God. And thus he returns to that doubt and vain inquiry from which he momentarily thought to have freed himself. He cannot but dare to "gaze into the maw of the World-Secret," hoping against hope to discover Unity and Truth, and vertigo seized him at last.

Remedies of melancholy: Imitation of Moujiks and animals

Lenau, despairing of happiness, sought wisdom and peace, but found neither. Peace, indeed, wrote Philemon, is the good that is vainly sought by the wise. Yet there is a specific against the malady of melancholy, a drastic

remedy of mental disquiet, lately recommended in a new form by Russian moralists. To end melancholy, to be at peace, nay, to be happy, we need but cease to think, to reason. All our sufferings are due to the foolish, fatal exercise of reason. Contemplate the Moujiks, the simple poor ; model your life on theirs, and you shall attain peace. Dostoïevsky, when not occupied in nightmare analyses of the state of mind of the demoniacally possessed, weeps in sympathy with the oppressed, the disinherited, the victims of society, the humble, the resigned. Tolstoï's heroes Bezouchof and Levine win peace after the storm and stress of scepticism by chance-meetings with the Moujiks Karataïef and Fedor. Tolstoï himself is at length converted by Sutaïef, and wins the peace of—fatalistic resignation, Buddhistic Christianity. The ideal for which men yearn, he cries, is not before us, but behind. Culture is anarchy, civilisation is barbarity. Truth and goodness are of the vegetative life, are realised by the vaguely fraternal, naïvely socialistic, wholly resigned peasants of burden.

It is Rousseau's doctrine grafted on Buddhism. Reflection, declaimed Rousseau, is a revolt against Nature. The man who meditates is lost, is a depraved animal. Utopia lies behind us. . . . As though the return to nature was possible or desirable ; as though nature and spirit were not parted by a gulf. The state of nature, the historical Utopia, was, and is, Hobbes's state of war ; and civilisation, one might hold, is most natural, precisely because the struggle for life is therein at the acutest. . . . Well, Kant, mindful of Rousseau, defended Moscati's paradox that man, misled by reason, has diverged to his cost from his natural four-footed mode of motion, or at least is inconvenienced by the

change. Goldsmith, after Buffon, painted the enviable state of animals, solely occupied with present good; and Buffon was but repeating Pliny. And Pliny was merely expanding Menander's

> All creatures are more blessed in their condition,
> And in their natures worthier than man.
> Look on yon ass! . . .

Leopardi, indeed, preferred to envy the birds, who bear witness in song to the delusive gladness of the world, who are imaginative and happy like children, while animals are grave and melancholy like savages. But those wise ancients whom he eulogised and envied were content to envy the race of animals as a whole. Seneca proposed for human imitation their speedy oblivion of distress; Plato their continence. The Epicureans bade us copy their prudence in avoiding pain, and Metrodorus, Epicurean "of the sty," failed not in due admiration of his unconscious teachers. How wrongheaded of Giordano Bruno to indite a satirical sonnet against Asinity; of John Stuart Mill, Epicureo-Utilitarian, to invalidate his doctrine by introducing degrees in pleasure, to prefer being a discontented Socrates to being a contented pig! For the envy of animals is a commonplace, a truism; and a truth is no less true for often repetition. Aristotle, indeed, congratulates men on being men, since animals are incapable of the pleasures of contemplation. But the life of the contemplative Buddhist is the ideal of the vegetative life. And the Russian peasants, models for our imitation, are unconscious Buddhists. . . . Moreover, since Descartes showed that animals—and men, so far as regards their animal nature—are automata, and modern scientists,

with a more stringent application of the law of parcimony, show that men are automata, wholly, and not in part, it logically follows that we are as happy as the animals we envy, that we are already that which we desire to be!

Methods of consolation

Foiled in the quest of happiness, men apply for consolation to reason, and learn at most, it would seem, that in a little while, say fifty years, their present misery will matter not. Look, for instance, at Horace's commonplace that pale death knocks alike at the door of the palace and the hut. It is the burden of Villon's songs; where is Flora the light-of-love, and the thrice sage Héloise, Queen Blanche, and Joan of Arc? . . . "but where are the snows of yester-year?" It is the oft-recurring refrain of Marcus Aurelius: these men of fame made a great noise and figure formerly, but what is become of them now? They took but a turn in the world, and are long since gone. Some of them sank at once, and left no memory behind them. The history of others is overcast, and dwindled into fables, and a third sort have dropped even out of fables. All things are transitory, and quickly become as a tale that is told. He uses this refrain, indeed, to exhort us to cease caring about trifles, to cleave to that which perisheth not, to "bear an honest mind and act for the good of society." But "the good that men do is oft interred with their bones." And if good results from evil, so evil results from good. Every action brings its train of mingled good and evil; the very Gospel was to bring a sword, and not peace, was to bring peace, and yet a sword.

Similar is the mocking consolation offered by Lucian and Fontenelle, by those who exercise their wit in

laying bare the vanities of life. Men are unequal in life, but equal after death. "For equality reigns in Hades, and all fare alike." Nireus, the comeliest of those that came to Troy, and the vile Thersites, differ no longer, and care not to be discerned each from each. And Chiron, gifted with immortal life on earth, longed for death—like a Swiftian Struldbrug—from very weariness of the daily round ; and gaining death, finds the same monotony in the realm below. The conversing dead are not otherwise reported by Fontenelle. Fame and success are accidents ; great action springs from folly, and not reason ; the sage practises death in life, and suffers *ennui* both in life and death, for man is born to aspire to all, and enjoy nothing. Equally, in Lucian and Fontenelle, if a great soul comes vaunting to the shades, they that have preceded his advent reveal to him his nothingness, his self-deceit, in trusting that he was some great one. Dark to himself in life, as we might say, as he was dark to others ; for

> What heart knows another's,
> Ah ! who knows his own ?

They that possess, or rather are possessed by genius need not sue, vainly sue, reason for consolation. Have we it not, indeed, on the best authorities that genius is allied to madness, that the poet is ἔνθεος καὶ ἔκφρων ? Theirs is the consolation that comes from soiling fair white paper with spider-scrawls—"What does not paper suffer ? " smiles old Plutarch. Antimachus, bereft of his wife, dulled chagrin with a melodious elegy that was to be a bead-roll of illustrious sorrows like to his. And thus the Black Knight of Chaucer, in his heavy complaint "for that he cannot win his

ladie's grace," takes record of Palamedes and Hercules, of young Piramus and true Tristram—heroes that were foredone by love. . . . In brief, others and greater ones have suffered even as we ; *solamen miseris socios habuisse doloris*. Frail consolation this, to "commit," as Sir Thomas Browne would say, "that natural fallacy of man, to take comfort of society, and think adversities less because others suffer them." Frail consolation also, to bid, Ulysses-like, the heart endure, for that it has endured worse fortune, or to rehearse the present sum of negative happinesses. . . . But to return. The poets pluck the flower of sorrow, lull for a while their grief with word-music of their own making, felicitous in the expression of their infelicity. A Shelley finds that the world is a hideous nightmare ; but then he can evoke dreams that are fair, and more real, he maintains, than "life's unquiet dream." A Landor needs not to fret because of evil-doers, for he can wholly console himself by chastising them in Latin epigrams which they will not see, or seeing, not understand. But, alas ! these happily unreasonable poets, though they think to eternise their sorrows and their wrath, are not to be consoled by an eternity of fame. How could it be otherwise ? They are self-conscious, and self-consciousness is melancholy. René and Manfred, Rolla and Jocelyn, tread the broad stage and exhale their laments to tearful auditors. What beauty of appropriate scenery ! What harmony of phrase ! murmur applauding multitudes. And the poet, acclaimed, bows in proud scorn. Chateaubriand, Lamartine, Byron, weary of poetic fame, fling themselves on action, seeking self-forgetfulness, or at least diversion. Alfred de Musset, indeed, essays not action, wholly paralysed by the apparition of the "spectre of

Debauch." But for all of them, the lethal arrow cleaves to the wound; the gangrene of egoism is not to be healed. And the lyrists? There was no consolation for Lenau or Keats or Nekrassof or Leopardi. The singer of the *Buch der Lieder*, Heine the godlike, the devilish, found no solace in his many tears, nor in his "world-shattering" irony. Burns could not comprehend why his manifest inferiors were blessed with rank and fortune, and not he; but, we are told, he should have held that "his allotted and sufficient portion" was his genius, and recognised that Burns, the man, was treated according to his deserts. . . . Nay, had they been consolable, had they been merely sentimentalists, making a luxury of grief, they would have gained no lasting fame and sympathy.

The consolation of metaphysics. Reason, faith, and doubt.

Coleridge, when the poet in him was dead, sought refuge and consolation in metaphysical research, "which exercised the strength and subtlety of the understanding without awakening the feelings of the heart," keeping alive the while "the heart in the head" by the study of the mystic Pantheists, who enabled him "to skirt, without crossing, the sandy deserts of unbelief." Sainte-Beuve, after the dolorous storm and stress of the days when he was Joseph Delorme and Amaury, wrote, ere the poet died in him, those "Les Confessions" which consoled him not, and then sought refuge in the study of Pascal and the Jansenists, which caused him definitely to abandon the thorny pillow of faith for Montaigne's "soft pillow of doubt." Thus, by the aid of theological metaphysics, the one found consolation in faith, and the other in doubt. And, withal, Coleridge grieved that he needs must lapse from poetry to "mental

disease," must delve "in the unwholesome quicksilver mines of metaphysic depths," must strive to "steal from his own nature all the natural man." Ought I to adventure once more, as in time past, in the "holy jungle" of metaphysics? Would my adventuring end in faith; or would doubt be confirmed? Should I be comforted by the presumption that I knew; or fall into deeper despair by the increased conviction that all presumption of metaphysical, theological knowledge is illusion?

From time to time I ceased to listen to the singers of Melancholy during the hours of my secret, nightly solitude in Babylon, ceased to live other and fairer lives fabled by poets and novelists, ceased to regard the symbolic frescoes of the ages that rose before me from the pages of artist-historians, and hied me to the rampart of my tower of ivory. Thence I could pass in review the contending contemporary combatants. I reviewed them disinterestedly. Here was I, poor and obscure; and yet these champions, priding in their chosen badges, had toiled and strained that they might worthily parade before me on their way to death. I beheld their internecine strife, marked how they sought in cunning fence the joints of each other's armour. Each proclaimed his blazon, the merit of his cause; his tale was good till that of his opponent was heard. I knew the lineage of each; it mattered little whether they vaunted or ignored it. . . . Nay, it was a mournful spectacle. Were they not brethren? was it not ever a Polynices matched with an Eteocles? Each fought for Truth; Thebes, in the interests of Truth, must be preserved against attack, Thebes, in the interests of Truth, must be won from its oppressors that men might dwell in peace. Deadly each to each,

for the weapons on either side were drawn from the armoury of Reason. Hapless Polynices, that, fighting for the Eternal City, he must trust in weapons of Reason, that are like to wound the wielder, that are dangerous to friends as well as foes! Hapless Eteocles, who must stifle the voice of his heart, if he is to resolutely press onward to the capture of the citadel! And there are priestly men on the side of the aggressive Argives, men like Amphiaraus, fair in the integrity of their lives, devoted to truth, and worthy of reverence, while, too often, they that defend the altar, Polynices and his like, are enemies of the gods.

Armour of faith alone befits the champions of Thebes. *Le cœur a des raisons que la raison ignore*, the heart has reasons that reason knows not of. Nothing can be proved, nor disproved, by reason, that is worth the proving. Let the champions of Thebes gird on the armour of reason, and the direful result is foreseen. Luther will reason out his faith, and it is Lessing who applies his principles. The Rationalists, in turn, are the heirs of Lessing; they draw the logical conclusions of the data he bequeathed them. Reason, indeed, as Butler says, is the only faculty we have wherewith to judge concerning anything, even religion itself. Butler will give reason for his faith. And in time it is held that Butler's defence is one of the most terrible persuasives to atheism ever produced. Newman puts faith before reason, and yet reasons. His inferences can but result in probability, and needs must he, yearning for certitude, seek refuge once again in faith. As well not reason at all. His opponents also have their probabilities based on reason, probabilities contrary to his. Is it worth while to reason? What does the

thinker demonstrate, except the fashion of his own temperament ?

But he who should don the armour of faith is like to be taunted as an obscurantist, a coward. He is invited, bidden, to dare the combat, armed even as his foes. . . . And yet these Knights of Reason who summon him to stand ground and maintain it are, they also, bondsmen of faith. They assent to hypotheses, give credence to that which is merely probable. They believe in the unknowable, in anthropomorphical abstractions, in teleological—that is to say, anthropomorphical—world processes ; they are dogmatic dualists or determinists.

Reason, and your reason will lead you to join the school of the Sceptics. For Epicureans, Stoics, Pyrrhonists, and Neo-Academicians are all alike Sceptics. These and their modern representatives suspend judgment, balance probabilities, distrust all reason save the practical reason, seek to attend solely to morality and common-sense. But problems of ethics are inevitably linked to problems of metaphysics ; to reason on morals is to reason on reason ; and thereby the whole question is again reopened. Reason ! reason ! what is it ? what can it do for us ? asked the reasonable Madame du Deffand in agony. It can prove our existence, Descartes would have proudly rejoined, for I am enabled to believe in my existence by doubting it, since doubt is thought, and thought implies a thinker—*cogito, ergo sum.* The same magnificent result could be obtained from St. Augustine's *fallor, ergo sum :* self-deception, illusion, implies existence. Thought, then, involves doubt and self-deception. And how shall thought, reason, prove that existence, life, is

not death, or that death is not life? Who can know, indeed? asks Euripides. An Epicurean poet in the *Anthology* roundly affirms that life and death are one. A Bichat can only define existence, life, as the sum of the functions which resist death—which is merely to say that life is life, and that death is not life, and to leave us still wondering what, then, is life, and wherein do they differ. Shelley, indeed, finds comfort in the "modest" and "pleasant" creed that death and life alike are mockeries. And poetical faith is quite as respectable as philosophic reason.

The consolation of metaphysics, continued.

I cannot live in the present, cannot trust to present appearances as a mortal should. Mutability, sang Spenser, and died in the singing. Mutability, I re-echo, adding the strophe of my life to the endless mournful song. Mutability and Illusion, sing our occidental Buddhists. Idealism, the sense of the limitations and relativity of human perceptions and conceptions, the despair of knowing Truth,—if these should be but recognitions of Illusion necessary and inevitable, of the Eternal Maïa? Often have I quieted myself with the thought that to raise, or dwell on, such questions was otiose, for Death was near, and Death would solve the enigma. Why not desist from thought, make shift to rest content with the orderly performance of daily duties, and patiently abide the sure revelation of Death? But if Death also be merely another phase of Illusion—a transition to another sphere of illusions? . . . If, at least, the change were from dolorous to happy illusions! . . . Or, again, if Death be simple annihilation, mere cessation of sense and thought?

If I cannot live in the moment, it should follow forsooth that I am all the better prepared to live in the Eternal. And for such life, I only need to be in possession of "adequate ideas," to be a philosopher. What, then, is this *philosophia perennis*,—perennial, despite all denial of Positivists—this Metaphysic? The science of sciences; the truth of science, as science is the truth of common-sense; the universal explanation of the "why" of things, as natural science is the explanation of the "how"; the systematisation of the principles of Being and Knowing? Or, on the other hand, is it the science—of the unknowable? Rightly understood, the investigation, according to the methods of physical science, of the phenomena of consciousness, —psychology, in short? Shall I be critical with Kant, and discover an impassable abyss between the phenomenal and the real; or shall I criticise Kant with Fichte and Schelling and Hegel? Shall I be an Idealist, with Fichte, restate Spinoza's dogmatism in terms of Kant, hold that *Ich ist Alles;* or a mystic Intuitionalist, with Schelling, discover the Absolute Unity, the pure Indifference of which Nature and Spirit are coequal manifestations, hold that *Alles ist Ich;* or a Gnostic, with Hegel, discover the absolute correspondence of the laws of Thought and the laws of Nature, hold that the objective world is the manifestation of the same spiritual principle of which we are conscious in ourselves, that spiritual principle which is unity in difference, permanence in change, which develops itself by antagonisms, and realises itself by self-alienation? Or, on the other hand, shall I be a Positivist and Agnostic? Shall I bid the metaphysicians postpone their explanation of the "why" till

such time (the Greek Calends, I suppose) as the "how" shall be completely known, as Jouffroy, metaphysician though he was, was for postponing all metaphysical research as to the nature of the soul till the experimental science of psychology should be complete? . . . Nay, I am with the Gnostics against the Agnostics, and with the Agnostics against the Gnostics, content with neither.

Joubert styled Metaphysics the poetry of the intellect; which definition resembles Novalis's "philosophy is the poem of the understanding." Poetry, indeed, is creation, and the metaphysician, like the poet, is a fanciful creator from given materials. His poetic is geometrical, algebraical; his method is amplification by deduction from first principles. He is a poet with a personal, and therefore limited view of things. Merely a poet, for his first principles are personal beliefs, beliefs congruous with his temperament. To understand his time and his temperament, congenital and moulded by circumstance, is to understand his system. His given temperament is congruous with a given aspect of truth; the laborious system he presents to the world is but the logical development, the lengthy expression of his view of life. Hence the lack of finality in all systems of philosophy. A system is but a more or less stately structure fashioned out of the materials to hand by a new architect. Disciples discover that the structure is inharmonious and incomplete, ruin it, and divert some chosen portion of the materials to raise an edifice of their own. The palace of the Idea is like the web of Penelope, for ever being constructed, destroyed, and reconstructed.

The same, continued: Development.

Werden, *Devenir*, Development—that is the master-word of present-day philosophy. Evolution is the

Hegelian *Werden* modified to the requirements and methods of natural science. Heraclitus's flux, Empedocles's and Zoroaster's war of Love and Hate, of Ormuzd and Ahriman, are dominated by an immanent final cause, a principle of progress. All things progress towards universal harmony ; the Golden Age is before us, not behind ; God is in process of elaboration by the human consciousness. . . . Yes, all things progress towards universal annihilation ; the Golden Age will be attained when humanity in its consummate wisdom decides to free nature and itself from the irrational "will-to-live" ; God when elaborated will be Nirvana—cry the pessimistic Evolutionists, in equal exultation. And, indeed, there is small ground for choice between the hopes of the pessimistic and optimistic Evolutionists ; for, to the latter, Evolution is the "change from an indefinite coherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity, through continuous differentiations and integrations" ; and "equilibration" once attained, the reverse process must needs set in,—the goal is merely the starting-point, the "indefinite coherent homogeneity" of Nothingness. And the whole pother is to be renewed in another cycle, I suppose. In similar fashion, Origen, Christian Evolutionist, maintained that the end, the restitution of all things, is always like the beginning, though he modestly allowed that neither men nor angels can apprehend the beginning or consummation. Nor, assuredly, can men, angels, and Hegels apprehend the necessity of such evolution. But what is this philosophy of Hegel, of Spencer, of Origen, but an old-world tale ? Thought, Being, the One, for some unknowable reason produces, degenerates into, Existence, Becoming, Nature ; and the world-process is the constant

retrogression of the Multiple to the One. Brahma, floating from all eternity in the lotus-chalice, Infinite holding converse with Infinite in the silence of Non-Being, falls prey to infinite melancholy. He desires to be no longer One, craves self-sacrifice. Being limits himself in Becoming. But to be life is to be death ; that which is finite aspires to return again to the infinite, to be lost in Nothingness. Existence is but the trinal rhythm of renascence, zenith, decadence.

And if this be all too vertiginous, if the vision be narrowed, the thinker, divining the future, will comfort you by signalising the advent of triumphant democracy, latter-day invasion of barbarians who need not travel to invade. Or by way of consolation, you may foresee the subjugation of the democrat barbarians by the yellow or black barbarians of inferior races. Or you may gratefully listen to the scientist who prophesies, after due induction, that the future man will be bald, purblind, and mainly paralytic, glad to be released from existence by a kindly erratic comet, or a renewed Age of Ice.

The same, continued : Ethics.

There is no consolation for me in Metaphysics. Should I then abandon Metaphysics for Ethics, like the ancient Sceptics whom I have mentioned in passing, that is to say, like the Epicureans, Stoics, Pyrrhonists, and Neo-Academicians ; turn with Kant from the "Pure" to the "Practical" Reason, with Fichte from the *Wissenschaftslehre* to the *Sittenlehre?* But in no wise should I escape Metaphysics, for all ethical, like scientifical, systems are inevitably based on metaphysical assumptions, on transcendental denials and affirmations —witness the anti-metaphysical Positivists and the would-be non-metaphysical adherents of "La Morale

Indépendante." The man of science, indeed, may deduce a system of ethics from his first principles to complement and crown his scheme; while the man of action, intent on his own self-preservation, or his own and that of others, may go on his way not caring to criticise the principles he has assumed—but each and all are involved in circuitous reasoning; as Spinoza knew, ethics must be based on metaphysics, and also metaphysics must be based on ethics. There is no escape.

Moreover, as in the case of metaphysical systems, systems of ethics are reducible to types. And to comprehend the systematiser is to comprehend the system. I am thus thrown back on melancholy; for if I discover the type to which I approximate, I discover my isolation, my one-sidedness, my incompleteness.

Again, whether I adopt as congruous with my temperament subjective principles of ethics, or legal, or political, or transcendental, or religious; whether I hold with Kant and Fichte that philosophy, the rational, supersedes religion, the pictorial, or with Hegel that the rational and the pictorial are but two aspects of the same unity, or with Matthew Arnold and Boccaccio that philosophy and religion alike are merely poetry—I end in mystery. And how reason on mystery?

This much at least I can say: my scepticism has had no influence on my conduct. It is indeed held, and with truth, that, once scepticism admitted to the head, it must needs penetrate to the heart; but, still, conduct may not be affected. "Passions come first, and doubts follow," preached Massillon. Not in my case; doubts came first, and passions neither accompanied nor followed. I was born gentle; I was not

passionate, not blind and therefore selfish; I was dowered from the first with an *anima naturaliter Christiana*, as Tertullian said of Marcus Aurelius—Marcus Aurelius, who counted gentleness among the fairest virtues, who counted gentleness and kindness as fit not only for women, but for men also. Questions of practical morality barely affected me; goodness came easy to me. And circumstances made my conduct still more easy, by removing opportunity for transgression, by forcing Stoicism on me. So easy, that verily there was no merit in my goodness. "It is one thing to be tempted, Escalus; another thing to fall." How if, so far from falling, you are not even tempted! Butler, I suppose, would tell me that, this being so, my "probation" would take the form of speculative difficulties. But "probation"? . . . In any case, I have not been exposed to any conflict between duty and passion. In early youth, it was but knowledge, knowledge that I desired. Thrown upon the world, it was but eager self-sacrifice for my nearest and dearest, vain self-sacrifice. And in my final solitude, it was but *Abstine, sustine; Sustine, abstine.* It cost me no effort to be courteous, modest, reserved, obedient. I fulfilled my duties, gave as little trouble as possible to those who served my needs of food and lodging. Other relations with the world of men I had not. I hid my wounds, and smiled when I was addressed. At least I did no harm, if I could do no good.

The remedy of action.

To resume in a sentence these last entries in my diary:—Philosophy, so far from bringing consolation, is like to deepen my need of it; and though ethical practice may be based on no theory, but merely on

temperament and habit, ethical problems cannot be separated from metaphysical, nor the "Practical" Reason from the "Pure." How then should I separate Action from Contemplation? Or how, finding no consolation in the Contemplative Life, hope to find consolation in the Practical? Doubtless by nature I am a contemplative quietist; moreover, by force of circumstances, action is debarred me; and still again, were action allowed me, I could not refrain from criticising action. Hamlet is incapable of other than spasmodical action, precisely because he is contemplative, because he ever sees that there are more sides than one to any and every question. Your Laertes is a man of action, precisely because he is thoughtless. And again, is the man of action less exposed to melancholy than the man of contemplation? Hercules is the typical hero of action to the Stoics, and yet the worthy Plutarch finds that he can adduce no more conspicuous example of the melancholic temperament than Hercules. Of a truth this Hercules, this active philanthropist, this universal justiciary, is the typical man of action, for his life is one ceaseless succession of involuntary crimes and vain endeavours to expiate the irreparable.

And yet how is it possible for me not to be the sport of the mirage of contrast, not to desire to essay the remedy and consolation of action? How should I not envy the man of action, ardent, prompt, indefatigable, ever accommodating himself to the present, passing from task to task, from conquest to conquest, with good-humoured ease? To such is given the joy of living, the joy that accompanies the free, spontaneous play of natural energy; is given courage, self-confidence, imperiousness. It is a malady, doubtless, this desire to

be other than one is ; yet there is an affinity between contrasts, between contraries. The contemplative would fain return to the Cave of Shadows, if only because he is weary of contemplation. If he can consider his exercise of intellect as truest action, yet he resorts, and must resort, for change, for contrast, to some lower occupation, manual, lingual. The body he trails with him craves its satisfaction ; he will exchange social nothings with acquaintances. Hegel unbent to the small-talk of society, and I doubt not Spinoza would still have sought to fleet the hours by chattering with homely Van der Spycks and Tydemans, by making little drawings ; would still have found some equivalent to lens-grinding, had he been independent of manufacturing opticians, and free to dwell in complete solitude.

Why do I resent being driven on a Stoic quietism, —driven, because my action is narrowed by the force of circumstance to mere bread-winning action ? There are fatalities of temperament ; we make our own fortunes even by being what we are. I could not have been driven on quietism, had I not been a quietist in advance, any more than the soil can receive the good seed unless it be already prepared and fitted to receive it. Not only must I perforce return to the world when the year is over, and "drudge for my outer covering" once more, but such return, such petty action, is desirable.

In any case, what a poor thing this action is, even on the grandest scale. A fitful fever, at the best. "The greater part of what we say and do is unnecessary," as Marcus Aurelius tells us. And, when not indifferent, unnecessary, our actions are harmful, in part, if not mainly, one might add. To act, you

must be purblind ; the man of action is no critic, no calm observer. He pursues his aim as a bull pursues a single toreador. No matter that there are twenty toreadors plying their goads, he is blind to nineteen of them. He must be prejudiced, be certain that there is only one. He must be a fanatic, a man of one idea, if he is to accomplish anything. Panurge had a simple action before him. He began to reflect, and the action seemed no longer simple. Rabelais was laughing, after his manner, at Panurge, resolved to marry and resolved not to marry turn by turn ; but laughter implies tears, and it is tearful enough to know that there are as many reasons for not doing as for doing. All action is guilt, since it is necessarily one-sided, says Hegel. More than this, whatever you do shall have mixed results ; good and evil are ever conjoined, says Euripides. *Es irrt der Mensch so lang' er strebt ;* when Faust and Wilhelm Meister cease to act, and therefore to err, their history must cease. And Goethe's moral of Saul seeking his father's asses and finding a kingdom serves but to justify all manner of actions which are not, like Saul's, rightful in themselves, justly commanded and complied with, but selfish only. Moreover, *nemo sibi tantum errat*, as Seneca says ; our errors cause others to err, the blind falls not into the ditch alone.

"Good and evil are ever conjoined." So much so that moralists are compelled to take for criterion the motive, the intent of action, and not the result. Mr. Herbert Spencer, reducing the good to the pleasurable, and measuring the goodness of actions by their consequences, does but expose his flank to the critic. On the other hand, the motive, the intent, justifies your

Inquisitors. They meant well by society. So did the enthusiastic thinkers that preluded the French Revolution ; and a deluge of blood followed on the universal preaching of benevolence and philanthropy. Puritan action under Cromwell brought about a corresponding reaction. Why act at all since reaction must follow ? . . . But even Hartmann's philosophy bids us act, bids us co-operate with Evolution. For pessimist philosophers must needs turn practical, turn to the side of action ; and the aim of all practical philosophies, even the pessimistic, is happiness. We must act, must aid in the concentration, the capitalisation, as far as possible, of cosmic intelligence in humanity, that humanity may be able not only to end its own existence, but also that of the unreasonable, evil world, and thus bring about the "negative absolute happiness." Truly a glorious consummation, and one devoutly to be wished ! How the devout pessimist must mourn at the opportunity forgone in the youth of the world ! For was not there a Brahman ascetic who direfully allowed himself to be diverted from his purpose of winning the peace of Nirvana for all things ? By virtue of extremest austerities he had nigh brought on a general cataclysm. A little more, and the will-to-live had been snuffed out. And yet he listened to the appeals of gods and men to desist !

Mephistopheles reaches over my shoulder and whispers : Thou fearest and scornest action because thy action has been unsuccessful. Is it so ? I am, indeed, weaned from hope, and almost from desire, of success, and count myself among the vanquished. And I look, or strive to look, upon the vanquished with the eyes of Browning or the Russian novelists. It is the

vanquished whom we should love. With a pitying love? Nay, perchance it is the successful we should pity, since these eat not their bread in tears, and therefore know not "the heavenly Powers," to use Goethe's words. These know not that Beauty, whose other name is Sorrow; for "beauty in the mind leaves hearths cold, and love-refined ambitions make the world unkind." Only too often, the first are last, their victory is defeat; for in their elation, they are deaf to the groaning and travailing of all creation, are blind victims of selfishness. They have achieved a "successful adjustment"; but then "a successful adjustment made by one creature involves an unsuccessful adjustment made by another," as Mr. Herbert Spencer duly informs us. In any case, the successful are hapless, for they condemn themselves to a speciality, and the development of one aptitude implies the atrophy of all the rest, *le métier déforme*. It is impossible for the specialist not to "desire this man's art, and that man's scope." Homer, indeed, might feign that Achilles was content to excel in courage, and minded not that others were praised for eloquence; but Horace knew well that no specialist is ever content with his lot.

The remedy of action, continued.

Swift, passionate pessimist, anxious to escape Contemplation, since he beheld in the world a hideous chaos, conscious that "his mind was like a conjured spirit that needed employment if he did not give it employment," essayed Pindaric odes and took sides in book-quarrels as to the respective merits of Ancients and Moderns. But such action as this could not console or content him, indifferent as he was to literary fame.

He needs must turn polemist and politician; he is borne for a while on the crest of the wave, and then flung back on solitude and contemplation, to weave ropes of sand, to trivially play on words and cry *vive la bagatelle*, to unmask corruption and express his detestation of "that animal named man," of Yahoo-humanity. On the other hand, Bacon, knowing himself "by inward calling to be fitter to hold a book than to play a part," nevertheless held it necessary for the furtherance of his contemplative designs to win place and gold. Vainly he sought to combine action and contemplation; long distrusted as a mere man of letters, he wins place and gold and enemies at length by devious courses and fawning flatteries, and delights all too well in the prosperous pomp of his state-craft. And yet he yearns the while for "leisure with honour," and winning leisure with dishonour writes of science "like a Lord Chancellor."

Indeed, as Plato knew, temperance and courage, quietude and energy, contemplation and action are antagonistic, incompatible; though he would fain discover the "royal science" which should link together the opposing qualities, alike in rulers and subjects. But surely Goethe discovered this "royal science"? . . . "I have been ever spoken of as one of Fortune's chiefest favourites; and I will not complain, nor find fault with my career. But, at bottom, my life has been nothing but toil and moil, and I can say with truth that, in my seventy years and five, not four weeks of real well-being have I enjoyed. It was the eternal rolling of a Sisyphus-stone, ever to be pushed uphill again. Too many were the calls on my activity, within and without. My real happiness

was my poetic thought and creation. But how greatly was this narrowed, hindered, hampered by my position in the world! Had I been able more to withdraw myself from public and private action, and more to live in solitude, I had been happier and my poetical production larger." So the Olympian Goethe to his Wagner-Boswell Eckermann. This supreme exemplar of Aristotle's ideal, this "magnanimous man," this philosopher and governor of men, this Goethe who possessed pre-eminently the Aristotelian conditions alike of the Contemplative and the Practical Life, sighed that he had not chosen solitude alone; re-echoed Luther, Luther the devotee of ideas, Luther who abandoned solitude for world-shaking action, who trembled at the results of his impassioned crusade, and sighed "I know not that in all my life I have ever felt real happiness."

Yes, the practical life is secondary in point of happiness. The more contemplative, the more happy is life. To contemplate is to be one's truest self. Contemplation is the divine life, and therefore the blessed life, though the vulgar think not so. Such happiness needs less supply of external goods than the active life, requires but leisure. . . . I do but resume Aristotle. Professor, leisured university lecturer, he lacks not for arguments to exalt the Contemplative Life over the Practical, fails not to shape his system to suit his temperament. Forsooth, it is the Contemplative Life itself which is the most practical, for to think is to act in the highest sense. . . . Would that I could live my length of days in this fair solitude, even without the virtuous wife—"the fairest garden in her looks, and in her mind the choicest books"—whom Cowley bestows

on his happy solitary. Even without the friends whose conversation, added to knowledge, constitutes to Plato the happiness of private life. But if such happiness were mine,—and it cannot be—my contemplation would be no action, and therefore not virtuous. Nay, my contemplation would be veriest misery, for knowledge is but sorrow to me. It were best to act—if action were possible.

The same, continued: The action of men of letters.

On Aristotelian principles the man of letters is a man of action. He defaces leaves of virgin paper with ink-stains, and these leaves gathered together are *opera*, are works. His words are equivalent to actions. Now, the disinterested—or uninterested—observer of my case would incontinently class me with the *déclassés*, the superfluous products of modern education. The aim of education in a utilitarian age, he might say, is apparently to produce gentlemen of liberal culture; but the vast majority of these "gentlemen" are constrained to seek a livelihood, and they find to their dismay that "every gate is thronged with suitors, and the markets overflow," that demand is anything but equivalent to supply. "Too old," as Diderot said, to begin to learn some useful art, "they become actors, soldiers, thieves, gamblers, rogues, and vagabonds." Or, lacking talent for such professions, these descendants of the mediæval "poor scholar" resort in final desperation to literature, would-be purveyors of mental provender to a glutted, indifferent public.

Nay, it is calm, it is *placida pax*, that I desire. Happily, I am untouched by the malady of genius. The malady of genius is usually complicated with that of poverty, and it is quite enough to be victim of

poverty alone. It should be a matter of consolation that no zeal consumes me to add another example to a revised edition of the *Calamities of Authors*. Your genius, your Keats, must pathetically cry, "O that something fortunate had ever happened to me! then I might hope, but despair is forced upon me like a habit." But the biography of poets is an endless martyrology. To be a poet is to be emotional, passionate; and "no joining others in their wailing, no violent emotion," is the command of the sage to himself. Your Lessing, then, sanguine, militant? He, well equipped for the struggle, must sigh at thirty-seven that none will hire him, literary man of all work though he be, "doubtless because nobody knows what use to put me to"; his melancholy deepens with added years, and at the end, though like Constance, he "instructs his sorrows to be proud," he must whisper, "I have had no luck." But thinkers are necessarily "unpopular." Thackeray, then, shall summarise for me: "Better break stones than be a popular author"—even a popular author, one who can amuse, and share the ample rewards of all amusement-providers. . . . In any case, I am a child of Obermann, conscious of impotence, unimpelled by a fatality of temperament to seek a garret in Grub Street. But were I a child of René, conscious of power, I should disdain to use it. For I fain would dwell in the temple of Peace; and woe to him who breaks silence, who attracts attention by strenuous original utterance! His days are no longer his own; he is object of idealisation and depreciation; he is misjudged and misjudges himself. He learns in suffering what he teaches in song or prose. If he confesses his own sorrows, he does despite to his own dignity; he violates the dignity

of others, if he takes them for his unconscious models. If he extends his range, and holds the mirror up to contemporary society, he shocks by truth, and is suspected of cynicism. If he trusts to fancy and imagination, he is a purveyor of anodynes, an artist, blind to the realities of life in the interests of his art. . . . Silence is best, even were I capable of breaking silence. Silent resignation is the profoundest criticism of life.

The same, continued: Vauvenargues.

If Swift, conscious that he was born to be a ruler of men, scornful of all literature that should not be an act in words, held dictatorship for at least a season, Vauvenargues, with like consciousness and scorn, was wholly baffled in his desire to compass the felicity—if it be felicity—of action. Now, for long the Marquis de Vauvenargues was little more than a name to me, the writer of a century of closely-printed, mainly arid, pages bound together with my La Rochefoucauld Thoughts and Maxims! I dismissed them with a curt *latet dolus in generalibus*. Fragments of an Introduction to the Science of the Human Mind! Your eighteenth-century psychologists were confident enough, but I congratulated Vauvenargues on his release by death from the continuance of such a task. Delineations of social types; appreciations of French "Augustan" writers, proceeding by way of parallels and antitheses! Negligeable imitations, these, of La Bruyère; a student's exercises in rhetoric.

Yet when I chanced to set about reading him I speedily discovered the man behind the work, and shaped a Vauvenargues in accordance with the legend. Evidently a lofty, ardent soul, hampered by adverse circumstance; a Stoic because he must, yet not em-

bittered; serenely heroic under continuous disappointment and increasing malady; solitary, in reaction against and in advance of his age, yet by his candid tenderness commanding respect from the few that knew him, even the respect of the Voltaire to whom he addressed himself. An impoverished noble and a subaltern soldier who had gained nothing but disease by his campaigns, who published a single anonymous volume—a volume of veiled protests against ill-fortune, barely discussed and speedily dismissed to an oblivion of fifty years—and died in pain and destitution at the age of thirty-one.

At length I came across those letters of his that saw not the light for a hundred years, and was enabled to penetrate his reserve. The closer vision thus permitted had its usual effect; the charm of the vague was dispelled; the ideal figure solidified into human proportions and imperfections. I found that his period of confident pagan Stoicism was but a brief one, ending in distrust; that it was doubtful whether at any time he had been a Christian Stoic, as was supposed, doubtful that the loss of faith had even cost him so much as a struggle, so early and so firm was his neutrality. I could but regard him with unrelated sympathy, in impersonal comprehension. Nor had he failed to sow wild oats, to soil his dignity with facile amours, though, indeed, these errors, which he charges to his early intemperate love of liberty, soon yielded to renunciation—renunciation, since he cannot hope to be comprehended by ordinary women, and they who could inspire in him desire to be comprehended would not deign to cast a glance upon him. With such renunciation I could sympathise, and the spectacle of his high-soaring ambition, his consuming desire for glory, so constantly, so wholly thwarted, could

not leave me unmoved. Had I not also cherished vain ambitions and ideals? Proudly, invincibly self-confident, sure that he was born to be a leader of men, he vainly sought and sued for a fitting sphere of action. Hopeful to the last, he is yet compelled to doubt at times whether it had not been better to proportionate his hopes and designs to his circumstances. He recommends self-investigation, and consequent accommodation of desires to powers; in moments of despondency he recognises that there is no harmony between his desires and his powers, his head and his heart, his heart and his fortunes; but, then, he cannot renounce his desires, he suffers less from their domination than if he were to endeavour to suppress them, it is a point of honour and a principle to let his heart have its way, though Stoicism and his actual situation counsel constraint. At length, Voltaire made interest to procure him a diplomatic post, object of his moderated desire, now that he must cease to hope for a warrior's glory; but the offer came too late; an attack of smallpox consummated the ruin of his health; there was nothing left him but a year-long agony, a reluctant declension to the sole sphere of action which was still open, that of literature, and an exhibition of reserved serenity under poverty and pain which called forth the wonder of his new associates. . . . All this is tragic enough; but what if his self-confidence was self-deceit? Action was debarred him, indeed; but was he not self-deluded in the belief of his capacity for action on a grand scale? Chafing against his bonds; depreciating the action of thought; sharing the prejudice of his rank against men of letters, and scorning them further from moral and intellectual reasons; an author only by compulsion, for

men write *faute de mieux*, he is convinced, write because they may not act—it is yet most doubtful whether he could have been other than he was, a moralist, a man of contemplation.

Liberty of action he craved, ample opportunity to employ his whole soul in a limitless career! Fired by Plutarch, he would fain be a Cæsar, or at least an Alcibiades. In his first enthusiastic admiration of energy, he can admit a Catiline, and look back with regret on the times when men were free to be brilliant criminals. Unscrupulous energy was better far than mediocrity. "Liberty," he feverishly writes, "reveals, even in the excess of crime, the true greatness of our soul. In the 'happy centuries' of Greece and Rome, the energy of nature glows in the midst of corruption; manliness presents itself without restraint, pleasures know no infamy, wit no affectation, haughtiness no vanity, vice no meanness or hypocrisy.". . . One is almost inclined to turn away from him as a hopeless victim of an all-mastering passion. He learns, however, to moderate his idea of liberty, or at least to recognise that such liberty was not for him. Driven back upon himself, that sombre self from which he yearned to escape by grandiose action, he thinks to discern another form of "true grandeur of soul" more appropriate to his case. "It is not easy to change one's heart, but it is still more difficult to stem the rapid, forceful tide of things, and therefore it is chiefly to self-perfection that we should direct our energies, and true grandeur is to be found in such a task. . . . The soul is great in virtue of its thoughts and sentiments; the rest is beyond our power. When outward action is refused, it turns upon itself." He will thank Nature that she

has made virtue independent of happiness, and will front adversity undismayed, though he must fear that true greatness of soul is incompatible as a permanent state with meanness of fortune, that such meanness tends to degradation. But, as an advocate of the passions, as an avowed determinist, he is unwilling, unable to forgo his ardent desire for glory. He is ready to admit that a lofty soul needs no external glory, no mouthings of fame, but "at least, glory confirms a man in his grandeur, conceals from him his meanness, satisfies his heart, in a word, bestows happiness upon him." He discovers, however, that the quality of the passions depends on the quality of the heart which conceives them, and that his own heart is of a lofty quality. Therefore he is led to "aspire to honour, that he may diffuse good around him."

Indeed, he is never weary of proclaiming that to his heart he owes his nobleness, his strength, his serenity. The heart is the source of lofty sentiments; to be dominated by lofty sentiments is to be in the way of glorious action; consciousness of the capacity for glorious action is a safeguard of magnanimity under adverse fortune. The heart is not only the supreme arbiter of taste, but the source of truth; sentimental, emotional knowledge is the highest knowledge; the intuitional method alone is infallible. Like Pascal, like Jacobi, like Schleiermacher, he holds a brief for the heart against the head. Reason is the enemy; the *esprit* which his contemporaries idolised served only to mislead and corrupt sentiment, to confuse clear issues. "The effect of a multiplicity of ideas is to entangle weak minds in contradictions." The logical result of reasoning is scepticism, and scepticism is a bar

to action. . . . Vauvenargues, the sentimentalist, evidently presupposes that his heart is always in the right place, that its impulses are uniform. More than this; because, listening to his own heart, he hears sweet music, he must needs infer that the hearts of others are equally musical. Because his own heart is generous, he must needs protest against the doctrine of the natural depravity of the human heart which the saintly Pascal and the worldly La Rochefoucauld held. In the ardour of his reaction, in his zeal for rehabilitation, he defends the passions too passionately, not as a Butler or a Spinoza, who, also, are endeavouring to reckon with human nature as it is. They and Leibnitz are as anxious as he to essay the reconciliation of disparities; but they do not set about their vain task by dogmatically premising that "there are no contradictions in nature." As though Vauvenargues was not himself in perpetual self-contradiction! He is ardent, spontaneous, emotional, and therefore prone to self-contradiction. He formulates his own temperament, conceiving the while that he is elaborating a science of the human mind. He is pathetic in his struggle against adversity; and, also, pathetic in his ignorance. Yet, had he possessed a wider acquaintance with speculation, a deeper sense of the difficulties of the problem, would not his melancholy have been deeper still? Would he not have been the less able to bear up against adversity?

Vauvenargues, continued: "Probation."

I turn again to Vauvenargues—this French Lord Shaftesbury, but a Shaftesbury who is melancholy, exposed to continuous adversity, charged with a fervent ambition which can find no outlet, this Rousseau with-

out Rousseau's love of nature and mistrust of man. His natal stars were in hostile conjunction, the astrologer would have opined, fondly thinking to have solved the problem. If life were what the moralist would fain have it be, a sphere of moral training, haply Vauvenargues might serve for illustration ; he was ever placed in the way of quelling desire, of learning renunciation and resignation. But what of those who are placed in the way of accomplishing their desires ? Are they not also worthy of moral training, worthy of being favoured with opportunities of poverty and privation and bodily malady ? Or again, if an ever-hapless Vauvenargues, and, say, an ever-fortunate Fontenelle, are extreme opposites, either of them half-educated, as not having experienced the contrary lot, why are there men who are favoured more than these, who experience vicissitude, are acquainted with adversity and prosperity alike ? Or still again, why of these last are some chosen to taste the sweets of adversity in youth, and to be comforted in age by prosperity, while others are chosen to be endangered in youth by prosperity, and when they have learnt due lessons, to be oppressed by adversity in age ? The fortunes of the individual are inexplicable ; but, if we turn in despair from the individual to the race, the problem is of no readier solution. To say that the race is in the way of moral training, of moral progress, is to presume that Nature has a moral end. The disinterested observer might remark that the moralist is a victim of anthropomorphism, and colours his vision of the universe by his subjective desire. He might point to the example of animals, who, like men, are vessels of honour or dishonour, according as chance, the unknown

cause, will have it, are favoured or oppressed by environment, are exposed to vicissitude ; might ask if they also are in the way of moral training. Presumably, they know it not ; but, surely, such unconsciousness strengthens the "moral postulate" for retribution, since they may not comfort themselves with the belief that their sufferings are educational. And the disinterested observer, again, might urge on the Evolutionist, who discerns in Nature a progress in the direction of the better, to take care lest he also be not a victim of anthropomorphic teleology.

If, in renewed despair, we revert from the race to the individual, it is of small use or comfort to be informed by the scientific preacher that life is a game of skill played against Nature. Surely a losing game at the best, and played against an opponent whose indifference seems ruthlessness. And at any moment she may beckon her sister Death to stay the game—an interruption which is often welcome. Moreover, our moves on the chess-board are not our own. She dictates them ; we move only as she allows. . . . Are we the puppets of Nature, are our affections the strings wherewith she moves us that she may vent her capricious humour, her tragi-comic jests ? Or are we the playthings of the gods, created with a purpose—which is the best construction that can be placed on the case, thought Plato. If this be so, we are still none the less puppets, and our motions are not our own. Or are God, Nature, Chance, Fate, Necessity, so many names and aspects of the unknown power—nay, power is also a human conception—of the Ineffable which determines us. . . . "Dost thou think that which is necessary has no merit ?" asked Vauvenargues, making

a virtue of necessity. Perchance we should seek such comfort as we may in the determinist's belief that the good is none the less good for being determined. Or we should embrace the illusion of free-will, accepting any justification of our belief, be it grotesque as that of Epicurus. Necessary illusion of the freedom of the will? But philosophers deem themselves necessitated to strip the veil from the illusion. And yet the man of action, and the man of sentiment, protest in favour of the illusion. Surely, it is a necessary "state-lie," which all must believe, though they believe that they do not believe.

The remedy of love.

What of the consolation, the remedy of love? But love, like action, is debarred me. I can but re-echo the love renunciations of Maurice de Guérin and Lenau and Vauvenargues. Sweet Spenser, whose "spirit out of dust was raised" by the Elizabeth he espoused, had yet first sung of Rosalind and unrequited love, and worn the chains of still another, second Rosalind; and, poet of Mutability, he must "retract" and "reform" his hymns of earthly love and beauty—after that his loved bride was won. "The error, and I confess it is not easy for spirits cased in flesh and blood to avoid it, consists in seeking in a mortal image the likeness of what is, perhaps, eternal." So wrote Shelley, conscious at length that the poet of Alastor and Epipsychidion had erred in hoping for perfect sympathy, in desiring to behold and possess a realisation of his ideal. Desires for the sympathy of a woman, desires to be loved, desires to be comprehended! How could I be comprehended, since I was a creature of moods, and comprehended not myself? I smile at my boyish dream of some "not impossible she," a dream that was dispelled by the

waking of reason. The Love-god sparing me his dread visitation, I have been enabled to look on women as pictures only, more or less fair, more or less successful in design and execution. I who was poor, and like to remain so always, could not hope to possess a picture either fair, tolerable, or indifferent; and I cared only for the fairest. A fair picture, also, should be duly enshrined in fair setting, harboured fittingly. I could command nor picture, nor setting. Therefore women have been to me but as pictures to be admired a moment in reverent silence, pictures that would pass from my sight into others' keeping, pictures whose images alone I might treasure in my memory. . . .

A lover of the beautiful, why, in place of dulling my eyes over futile philosophies and arid commentaries, did I not continue to train my hand to shape ideal women on canvas after the suggestions that reality afforded? My ardent, untiring quest after knowledge, my distrust of dalliance with half-talents, have brought me no sustenance, bodily or spiritual. I might have draped my chamber with my visions, embodied on canvases, and spared myself the pain of their gradual effacement on the tablets of memory. And this assuredly without detriment to my worldly fortunes, since I could have fared little worse than I have fared. I would have painted these fair women as I saw them, that is to say, as they were not, but as I saw them with transfiguring eyes. Though not one of these unconscious models had addressed to me so much as one of the words that living creatures use, though I had but beheld them at a distance, I should have heard their voices in the music I made before their pictured semblances. . . . But how should I have been furthered?

The adroitest painter is weary of his accomplished work, and rids himself of it as soon as may be, conscious of its inadequacy. Ever with him it is a fresh conception, a renewed attempt to fuse the mediocre reality and the elusive ideal, a repeated discontent with the results of his latest essay.

The same, continued. The love of the beautiful: Rossetti.

Lest Prince Gautama should fulfil the Brahman's prophecy, his father caused him to be secluded in a bower of delight beyond experience and unhappiness. But Gautama came to scorn the joys within his reach; he wept, and knew not why; he yearned, and knew not the object of his yearning. At length he stole away from his hated Paradise, and hastened he knew not whither. Soon, and he was shuddering in the wayside at spectacles of Age, and Malady, and Death. And thereupon he renounced deceitful joys, and fulfilled the Brahman's prophecy. Now, to the lover of the beautiful, Buddha's fortunes are, as it were, reversed. Distraught by his vision of the world, he seeks sanctuary in an imaginary paradise. He knows that life is mutability, that life is sickness and sorrow, and would fain forget his knowledge. He builds him a bower from which he strives to banish imperfection. But it is not given him to taste of the fountain of oblivion; he is master of no spell whereby to ward off thoughts and images of finite misery.

How, indeed, is it possible that lovers of the beautiful should escape melancholy? Romanticists, whether we will or no, we are unable to wholly harmonise sense and spirit, we cannot acquiesce in beauty incarnated. Wheresoever the mind, as Plotinus wrote, perceives a form, it is conscious that there is something beyond to

be desired. Beauty suggests the infinite, and we are thereby exposed to the pain that is born of contrast. Beauty is infinite, therefore elusive; it awakens momentary credence in the possession of complete felicity, but credence fades speedily away into baffled aspiration; the felicity that seemed in our possession mocks us ever in the distance. We thrill at the sight or thought of beauty, our hearts beat in heightened measure, we are erected above ourselves; but soon emotion flags; to joy that was brief succeeds indifference if not despondency that endures; we sink to littleness, sadly conscious of the narrow limits of our sensibility to delight. Again, Beauty stirs us to our depths; but in these depths lie countless recollections, ready to quicken at the slightest impulse; we inevitably confront the present with the past, and are melancholy, for the past is the past, and the present—which passes in the very thinking—is but, as it were, the nearest past. Nor do we escape melancholy by disinterestedness. Disinterested, we desire that others shall share our emotions, and yet we must needs encounter common coldness and indifference. We are constrained to discover that there is no possible catholicity in the love of the beautiful, that we are lonely sectaries. It is borne in upon us that the vast majority of men are almost wholly destitute of the sense of beauty, and even plume themselves on their privation; that there is little agreement even among professed lovers, since each of these desires a varying more or less of realism. And to the disinterested lover there is still a further, final reach of melancholy. We desire to hold, in spite of doubt, that beauty is the symbol of goodness, and as we crave that all should love the beautiful, so we crave that all

should love the good. And thereby arise dolorous scruples whether devotion to art be more than elegant trifling, nay, whether it be not culpable trifling. We look around on an evil world, and are inclined to conclude that allegiance to the beautiful is incompatible with allegiance to the good. "Was it right, we begin to ask with Coleridge, while our unnumbered brethren toiled and bled, that we should dream away the entrusted hours on rose-leaf beds?" The joys and pains and problems of art come to seem negligeable, contemptible. . . . It is this final, deepest melancholy of the lovers of the beautiful which causes a Plato to turn morosely Puritan, and a Ruskin to join hands with Carlyle. Even Rossetti cannot wholly escape it—witness his "Hand and Soul"—Rossetti who, in any case, knew all too well the protean melancholy that besets the egoistic lover of the beautiful. For beauty is but an accidental, momentary harmony in a world of almost constant discord; and woe to him who cannot make shift to endure discord.

And yet at first sight it would seem unreasonable to assign Rossetti's love of the beautiful as cause of his melancholy. Was not his a case of inverse development, of progress that is a gradual decline from breadth to narrowness, from health to malady, from expansive buoyancy to concentrated melancholy? Here is an inspirer and leader of men, virile and strenuous, conscious from the first of his vocation, armed with robust convictions, ranging freely within his happy limitations. But Death bereaves him of his Muse, of his wife long wooed, and won only to be lost; his sorrow is proportionate to his love; he is beset by insomnia and fears of failing eyesight; he essays a

remedy for insomnia that is more baneful than the disease, becomes a victim of chloral as Coleridge of opium, and though, unlike Coleridge, he has not to mourn the consequent death of his poetic faculty, of his "shaping spirit of Imagination," his sensitiveness and legitimate isolation are aggravated into suspicious nervousness and jealous seclusion. Thus his melancholy would be attributable not to his love of beauty, but to sorrow and ill-health. In similar fashion it might be maintained that, from the same causes, Rossetti the painter narrowed gradually from sympathetic to egoistic passion, from wealth of romantic invention to poverty of portraiture; and Rossetti the poet from the pictorial definiteness of dramatic ballads to the lyrical vagueness of the "House of Life." But such a comprehensible, parallel evolution of the man, the painter, and the poet is merely ideal, fanciful. The poet did not end with the "House of Life," he returned with increased vigour and clearness to romantic ballads and poems; there is no reason to suppose that the painter, with health and length of years, could not have carried into execution his earlier romantic designs, despite the insistence of his patrons for single-figure canvases; and, as for the man, melancholy was implicit in the temperament of his faculties, and adverse circumstance served but to deepen, not to originate it.

Given the temperament, melancholy was inevitable. He cared alone for poetry and painting, and for these solely as expressive of mystic love, and for mystic love only as directed towards woman. He is limited, and limitation is power; but he is not simple, and therefore not impervious to melancholy. He is preserved, indeed, from the anguish of the altruistic lover of the beautiful

by his consciousness that, as a creative artist, he is fully justified in working from his own heart, simply, and in doing that which is set in his heart to do—the lesson that his Chiaro learns in dialogue with his soul ; and yet there is an eternal conflict of opposing tendencies within him, and compromise alone, not reconciliation, is possible. The history of his works is the history of this conflict, of the passing supremacies of rival tendencies. From the first he is a Realist, but also an Idealist. From the first he is a Mystic, passionately sensuous, but also passionately intellectual ; like his revered Dante, he is at once a child of the South and the North. A Realist, he will sing at various periods his "Jenny," his "Down Stream," his "Soothsay" ; will begin in youth to paint his *Found*, and keep it on his easel to the end. An Idealist, he must yet present the ideal as a fact, painfully conscious the while that it is a fact alone in the land of dreams. Unable to reconcile Realism and Idealism, he mars his poetry by his realism, by his pictorial concreteness of vision ; his arduous fulness and richness of expression is too often accompanied by poverty of content : and he mars his painting by his idealism, by his abstract intellectuality ; he strains to make colour and line convey more than they possibly can convey. Unable, again, to reconcile Realism and Idealism, in poetry he drifts between objective, confident supernaturalism and subjective, despairing positivism : in painting he passes from illustration to portraiture, exchanges that purity of colour and minute intricacy of design which goes by the name of Pre-Raphaelitism for a Venetian richness and simplicity, and yet the ideal model and muse that has wholly mastered his heart is environed with minutely definite realities, and if her

gaze is spiritual and austere, her lips are sensuous; and, finally, he sacrifices elaborate sumptuousness for morbid, low-toned vagueness. A sensuous mystic, he is preserved by his intellectual nobility and grave sense of responsibility from any perverse mysticism of sensation such as that detailed by Friedrich Schlegel in his *Lucinde* or Heinse in his *Ardinghello*, from that voluntary heightening of pagan sensuality by actual consciousness of, or imaginative belief in, the sinfulness of sensuality which is the chosen theme of Baudelaire. And yet he is striving, like these, though in far less dubious fashion, to spiritualise the flesh, to reconcile two widely different, if not wholly incompatible orders of sentiment: and if at times his programme is almost that of Marino's *Adone*, if the spirit is held to have its perfection in bodily love, and Love knows not the loved one's "body from her soul," at others his programme is rather that of Dante's, the body is held to be merely the veil of the spirit, and the "confident heart's still fervour" is more than the "mouth's culled sweetness." . . . Rossetti, then, is melancholy because in the expression of mystic love he is unable to reconcile Realism and Idealism, Mysticism and Sensuousness; but far more than this, he is melancholy because Love himself and Lady Beauty are but aspects, phases, of Mutability. Truth, hope, youth, fame, and life—these "the heart finds fair," but Love is enthroned above them, and apart from him they are naught; yet Love, he finds, is but joint guardian with Death, Terror and Mystery of Soul's Beauty. "I and this love are one, and I am Death," he must learn in anguish. The lover knows not the beloved from himself, "neither our love from God"; yet what and if he must "look

on himself without her"? "And weeping I said within myself: 'Certainly it must some time come to pass that the very gentle Beatrice will die,'" wrote Dante. What and if he must lose her, and yet not dare to confide in an imaginative belief that "severed selves" may be reunited, that there is a passage "through death to love"? What and if he must resolve to "gaze onward without claim of hope, nor, gazing backward, court regret"; resolve to inscribe in sombre colouring on the portal of the House of Life, that is, the House of Love, these words, and these alone: Youth and Change, Change and Fate? Well might this lover's latest sonnets tell of Youth, and Manhood, and Age, and their vain interrogations of the Sphinx.

The remedy of love, continued.

There could be for me no help in love. Reason, indeed, may abdicate, confessing impotence to reconcile the war between my heart and head, war of the spirit against the letter, of the ideal against the real, of the moral order of man against the immoral order of nature; but Love will not reign in his place, Love that is joyously blind, voluntarily ignorant of the strife. . . . I remember a solitary, forced walk through the crowded streets on a holiday of the people—the wonted distress at the sight, the wonted "passage to a lesser perfection," the wonted *fastidium quotidianarum formarum*. Nature was unable to do what it would; it willed the perfect, but the material was recalcitrant—said the would-be calm philosopher in me, after Aristotle. Pity whispered: "I have compassion on the multitude." But such compassion as was mine rose from a dolorous sense of disproportion, of outraged harmony. It was the pity of a protesting artist, not the pity of a lover of humanity. Pity that life should be inflicted so heedlessly, so care-

lessly ; pity that men should be born of such unfit parents. Pity that the conditions of their lives should forcefully prevent the union of fair minds and bodies, should dwarf the one and the other irreparably. . . . A veritable Christian would have seen in these of the crowd, these unconscious caricatures, so many precious, priceless souls, grossly enveloped in coarse clay, perhaps, but bought with a great price ; so many tabernacles, rude, empty though they might be, or even occupied by devils, yet tabernacles that might enshrine the spirit, tabernacles whereinto the spirit sought entrance, yearning for invitation. . . . Soon, and I saw a graceful form emerge in the crowd and pass across the street in rhythmical movement. Superb of stature—for Pliny the Younger is right in desiderating magnitude in beauty —graceful exceedingly, her charm heightened by the neatness of sombre, undistracting dress. I caught sight of a profile carved boldly, exquisitely. Limpid, darkest eyes ; a complexion even-toned, warmly pale, unstained with red ; blackest hair in waves about a pure brow, and gathered behind into a simple knot. Quickly she was lost again in the crowd, I had but time to mark that she passed unnoticed—this, of course. . . . Was there any element of selfish desire in my deep, unknown admiration, in my glad, voiceless gratitude ? No, not for a moment. As it was but an artist's pity for the unlovely crowd, and not love of average humanity, so it was a mere artist's delight in recognising, or rather—since a hurried, passing glance alone was possible, a glance that doubtless lent more than it received—in divining an approximation to ideal beauty, delight that was greater because of previous pain at sight of countless victims of imperfection. This disinterested delight

was no more love for the one than my pity was love for the many. . . . It is a hopeless problem. I am but an artist after all, and the artist, says Renan, is "transcendently immoral." I am but an artist,—and an artist who can never subscribe a sculpsit or a pinxit or a scripsit to an ideal realised by him.

The remedies of love and action, continued.

Love, then, and Action are palliations at the most of melancholy. Distractions rather, remedies that are worse, perchance, than the disease. It would seem that the one is more appropriate to youth, the other to manhood. The remedy of love failing in effect, the remedy of ambition is essayed; the one passion, the one fever yields place to the other. Love I have been spared, nor am I like to fall victim to ambition. Action for glory's sake, for self-assertion? History is a nightmare, as Shelley knew, a bead-roll of human crimes and sufferings; and historical narratives are but so many volumes of a De Contemptu Famæ. Action for an idea? The idea can only be realised by compromise; gold, if it is to be useful, must needs be alloyed with dross. The result never corresponds with the intent. Witness Pope Hildebrand, who thought to establish the Church by the masterly action which entailed its fall. Or Luther, who draws back in dismay at the action of the peasants who took him at his word. Witness Anselm, defender of the faith, and thereby father of Rationalism. Or Dante, passionate reactionist, and unconscious herald of the Renaissance. . . . And the politician? His action, at least, is less dubious than that of the aggressive conqueror. But the politician is necessarily an opportunist, and a Machiavellian. A Bismarck, restorer of a nationality, must

needs draw distinctions between political and private morality, and justify the means by the end. The social reformer, then? The politician of peaceful progress—if peace is permitted him—must find that progress is but an ever-renewed attempt to ameliorate the evils incident on change, a profit and loss sheet, the balance of which ever remains much the same, since each gain entails loss.

But happily, or unhappily, action is debarred me. And were a career open, had I the talent of action, would it not still be wisdom to refrain? There is left, of course, the action of orderly duty, of ordinary bread-winning. Moralists would aver that Werther's cure depended on habitual daily toil; happiness is only to be found in the common ways of life, says the aged Chactas to René. I trod the common ways, accepted the tyranny of facts, sadly recognised the right, because the might, of facts. I accomplished my daily meed of inglorious toil without reproof, vainly hoping to benefit my nearest and dearest, to win success that they might be cheered. But they passed away uncheered, and my hours of leisure and solitude were wholly given to intellectual Epicureanism. I trusted that melancholy would yield to curiosity. It was curious to travel in my arm-chair; to live and think the lives and thoughts of men of all ages, in irresponsible sympathy; to be saint and sinner, Greek and barbarian, Oriental and occidental; to be scientist and mystic, man of action and man of contemplation. But I failed to compass self-oblivion. And since habit becomes a second nature, since the prisoner leaves his dungeon with a sigh, was it well to have availed myself of this opportunity of freedom from toil, freedom to think out the problem of life, and fall into deeper misery? But need I regret

my bonds? Must I not speedily return to my dungeon, when my furlough of freedom reaches its end? Must I not weave my ropes of sand day by day as heretofore? . . . "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might." It is Carlyle's gospel, but also that of the Ecclesiast, who ironically smiles at his own imperative fervour, questioning "what profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?" Work is a palliative at most, a temporary anodyne. Pascal has demonstrated sufficiently well that the circle of work and rest is a "vicious" one: men toil that they may rest, but rest when gained is unbearable. Men toil alike in business and amusement, in order not to think, in hope to "kill time," for life is short and yet all too long. "Let us toil without thinking," says Martin in *Candide*, "it is the only way to make life tolerable."

Happiness and immortality.

It were idle to seek tranquillity in place of happiness, for tranquillity is but a guise of happiness. Pleasure is still another guise, an ignoble one, perchance; but pleasure or happiness—Montaigne employs the one word, Bossuet the other—is the aim of man. Bossuet firmly avers that the whole doctrine of Christianity tends solely to make men happy. But Bossuet, as a Christian, postpones the realisation of this happiness to another world, when the ideal that is merely suggested and foreshadowed here and now, that is impossible under the conditions of earthly existence, shall be real. And meanwhile, the Christian is to find sufficient happiness in the practice of virtue, in calm submission and resignation, in cheerful obedience to the voice of conscience. The Stoics also claimed to possess a similar happiness, resulting from joyful submission to the Eternal Order,

claimed to be able to win by strenuous will this security and tranquillity of the blessed life. . . .

But this wisdom is of the few, of the minority in all ages ; this serenity is scorned by the average man, *l'homme moyen sensuel*, the sound and healthy man, as lacking all attraction. He would brand it with the opprobrium of asceticism, he would consider a constant meditation and exercise of death a constant death in life. Is, then, the difference between the sage and the average man due to the fact that, to the one, the thought of death and immortality is present often, and to the other, seldom ? But the Stoics thought of death as absorption, annihilation. At most, personal immortality was the privilege of a few great souls who should enjoy lasting serenity, and learn the secrets of nature. But Tacitus only hazards this as a pious hypothesis appropriate to a biographical eulogy ; and Seneca, when most Stoical, calls death annihilation. As for the average man, he seems little troubled by the thought of death. While he is young, he thinks death possible, but not probable for many years to come. He practises unconsciously Goethe's *Gedenke zu leben*. Think not of death, but of life. As he grows older, he stays not to reflect that he has more friends beneath than above the sod. He is sorry when death steals yet another from him,—but "'tis common." Time brings healing, and the good things of life must be enjoyed while enjoyment is still possible. His temperament allows him to forget death ; he regulates not his action by reference to immortality. That is too far away, too vague. He has his work to do. He has appropriate amusements and pleasures of habitude, and thinks not happiness is impossible, or only to be realised in another

life. He may admit, in hours of sharp sorrow, that life is a pilgrimage through a vale of tears; but he finds it pleasant to loiter on the way, and does not wish his journey at an end. Indeed, life is very tolerable to him, whether there be another or not. Sufficient for the day is the evil and good thereof; and doubtless all will come right in the end.

What, then, is this happiness that men seek in life, if, as Bossuet says, "we desire not immortality, we seek but the felicities that time bears away"? Poverty is the lot of the vast majority. It is only a few that are capable of the disinterested pleasures of the imagination, or of the so-called pleasures of profound thought. It is only a few who are gifted with both external and inward conditions of happiness, who possess and are able to practise the art of happiness, skilled in measuring and balancing pleasures and pains, delicate eclectics. And these latter would fall under Goethe's accusation of frivolity, for sooner or later, as he assures, they will cry that all is vanity, hapless in that they have not early and once for all renounced the perishable, the ephemeral. . . . Suppose, then, that men consider happiness to be possible, and the rich to possess the means of happiness. The logic would be: the rich are few; and we, the poor, the vast majority, are strong. Why should we toil that a few may enjoy happiness. Let us strip the rich, and share. They who can reason thus will not resignedly re-echo *paucis humanum vivit genus*, resignedly admit, with Kant, that the good of the species is at the cost of the individual, that Nature designs discord, the "unsocial sociability" of stressful, distressful competition. Or suppose the idea of a compensatory future life is relegated to the background,

if not denied. The logic is the same: why should the idle rich enjoy the fruit of our unhappy labour? But the average man is not logical. And he objects to socialism, if he possess aught earned or unearned.

It is natural to suppose that men would order their lives differently, according as they believe in another life or not. But, so far from this being the case, these Stoics, whose precepts are greatly akin to those of Christians, either believed in annihilation, or left the question open. Marcus Aurelius is resigned to either alternative, and never considers this alternative can have any influence on the conduct of life. And the Buddhists push asceticism to its utmost extreme in hope that they may win extinction. The philosophic Romans and Greeks in general found the prospect of a future life, of life in Elysium, as represented by their mythologies, little desirable, if not abhorrent. As to the life in Tartarus, Lucretius declares that it is the very fear of such future life that drives men to evil courses. Lactantius presents the alternative: if there be no future life, let us plunder, let us slay. That men have wallowed in pleasure when death was visibly at hand is amply shown by the narratives of the historic plagues and the memoirs of prisoners during the French Revolution; but kindly Plutarch, posing the case that a God or a King should grant to a doomed man the respite of an hour, to be employed at will, wonders if any could be found who, on these conditions, prefer to employ the hour in sensuality rather than in the performance of some generous deed, or in the comforting of his friends. There is no need to discount Plutarch's generous belief in human nature, or to pit Lactantius against Plutarch. It is clear that there are various classes of men, with

temperaments of varying degrees of ideality or sensuality. Men act according as their instincts of justice, of beauty, of dignity, are more or less imperious and constant. And two men of the same order of temperament may act similarly, though the one believes, and the other believes he does not believe in a future life.

The same, continued.

If I raise the problem of immortality, I raise a problem that is insoluble. The instinctive demand for immortality is a "moral postulate," a demand for a life in which goodness and happiness shall coincide, a demand for retributive justice, for compensation. . . . Plato finds that justice is human perfection. Society, then, will be the embodiment of justice. But there is no justice in the present state of society. Accordingly, Plato first reforms—on paper—present Hellenic society, and then discovers that even this reformation is insufficient. He devises an ideal society. But this Utopia is hardly to be realised, and, if realised, would speedily degenerate. Hence the necessity for his final vision of another life, in which justice wholly reigns. But he is obeying instinct, not reason ; he is confident in his faith, but not in his arguments ; he can but body forth his faith in poetic symbols.

As always, there is another side to the question. The Stoics judged that Plato, in discoursing of a future life of rewards and punishments, was discoursing as a politician rather than as a moralist ; and Leopardi's Porphyry reprobates Plato for inspiring men with hopes and fears and insoluble doubts as to a future life, since he and his like must ever fail in their object of restraining men thereby from iniquity. The demand for immortality, it may be urged, is a morbid excess of the instinct

of self-preservation. Sociologists recount for us the development of ancestor-worship. Thus we find the Aryan belief in the continuance of a dim, somnolent life within the tomb passing into the belief in an assemblage of souls in Elysium, living a timeless life that is a pale copy of material existence in time, as memories are pale copies of past sensations. We have to reckon with anthropomorphism, with our inability to conceive mind and matter not in conjunction, with the necessary illusion of personality—which is, perchance, but a succession of sensations and ideas—with the relativity of happiness and unhappiness, of good and evil,—relativity, for happiness is only to be known by contrast; the possibility of unhappiness removed, happiness would be a blank. . . . Well, Kant shows clearly enough that we can neither prove nor disprove the immortality of the soul, or the freedom of the will, or the existence of God, since there are no scientific data on which to ground.

By reasoning, it is possible at most to dower ourselves with the immortality of Aristotle and Averroes, with an impersonal immortality. Forsooth, we are immortal, because our "active intellect" is immortal. But since we remember not our past existences, and shall be unconscious of our present existence, such immortality concerns us not. What, then, of the "moral postulates"? Humanity materialises the vision of Heaven, and protesting spiritualists in all ages hasten to the other extreme. The vision of Hell is materialised, and present-day Christians must needs protest, even as pagan moralists protested, against the scanty justice implied in such materialisation. Human justice, indeed, must punish summarily, but complete equity

would pardon. *Tout comprendre, c'est tout pardonner.* We know that a man cannot be judged apart from his birth and circumstances, nay, nor by himself, for humanity is solidary. Vice is pardonable if involuntary, due to bodily conditions; pardonable also, if due to involuntary ignorance. The "lie in the soul," the inability to repent of Don Juan and the haughty heroes of Dante's *Inferno*, the choice of evil as good by Milton's fallen angel, is but a deeper depth of ignorance. For the Socratic and Platonic attribution of vice to ignorance is no mere paradox; Dante rightly holds that ignorance is the parent of error, and error of evil, Descartes that error is due to the disproportion between our faculty of willing and our faculty of knowing, Fichte and Buckle that the totality of human action depends on the totality of human knowledge. No man is fit for Heaven or fit for Hell; the good man is not wholly good, the bad not wholly vile. As Plato said, there is ever a remnant of justice in the evil; for, wholly evil, they would be incapable of action at all. Hence the "moral postulate" must needs take the form of a demand for a possibility of progress for all men.

But the sages, haughty, careless as Nature of the undeveloped germ, prone to disregard the commonalty, as Plato eliminated the lowest order of his ideal state from consideration, make the survival of the fittest a leading principle of their doctrines of immortality. As certain savage races are said to consider the possession of a soul as an exclusive privilege of their chiefs, so Seneca, Maimonides, Goethe bestow immortality on men of supreme intellect alone, on those who have risen above sense to the steady vision of the universal order. Similarly, to the theologian, they that shall be saved

are in a minority, are the few that have risen in this life from selfishness to self-devotion and self-sacrifice, that deserve immortality—unless, indeed, the theologian sides with Faith against Works, and puts merit out of court. But this aristocratic immortality! Who shall explain Goethe's unwonted expansiveness on the occasion of the death of Wieland, his Platonic, Leibnitzian, Spinozistic dream of immortality? Could he have interpreted his own dream, reconciled his own statements? Wieland and he, of the first rank in the hierarchy of souls, when their principal monads have disengaged their inferior monads from faithful service, that is to say, when he and Wieland voluntarily slip the mortal coil, will take part in the joys of the gods, associate eternally in the felicity the gods enjoy as creative forces. He would not be surprised to meet Wieland again and again in the course of the ages, ever radiating joy and light. Wieland's monad is too worthy to perish, and Goethe himself has visited and will visit the earth again and again. Had he not assisted at the creation, and were not the divinations of his genius reminiscences? As for the incidents of his previous existences, with the exception of a few great historic moments, they were not worthy of remembrance; indeed, did not Herder once tell him that he hoped they would meet elsewhere, say in Uranus?—but God preserve him from remembering there his present intolerable sojourn at Weimar! . . . And the immortality of Spinoza, Goethe's master? It is facultative, partial, like that of Aristotle and Averroes. It is an impersonal immortality of the reason. We are eternal, if we live in the eternal order. Your critic will find many expressions at variance with the rest of the system,

expressions which seem to propound a personal immortality based on merit. He may compare these expressions with the immortality of the Positivists, immortality of fame, immortality in the race that remembers famous originators of ideas. Or he may point out that Spinoza distinguishes between immortality and eternity, the latter being existence out of the bounds of time, union with God, adequate knowledge of the infinite and eternal essence of God—who, or which, is impersonal, and only the sum of its modes, is Nature. . . . Well might Goethe, waking from his dream about Wieland's monad, smile and insist that immortality was a matter of faith and not of knowledge. But since immortality is of faith, and not of knowledge, perchance I should listen to the consolation offered by a recent scientist. We are immortal —that is to say, our constituent material atoms are immortal. We have only to believe that atoms possess consciousness—surely no hard belief—and then we may rejoice in the thought that our present constituent atoms will ever enjoy "the indifferent tranquillity of inorganic repose, the sweet uniformity of elementary sensations" in agreeable alternation with "the passionate agitations of the organic state." The precious immortality, the precious consolation!

Immortality and contentment.

It would be a strange method of attaining contentment for a man to recognise by the light of the doctrine of Karma the exact justice of his present condition, however miserable that may be. The Buddhist doctrine of Karma offers a complete solution of the enigma of life—to those who can accept it. It has the merit, such as it is, of being irrefutable. Each is what he has made

himself in his previous existences; each presents in himself an exact balance of his merits and demerits in his previous lives. A man is the sum of his works, his own Providence; he calls himself to that state of life in which he finds himself. The wonderful explanation! We are what we are, and are so because we are so. . . . Plato offers us similar consolation and satisfaction in his symbolical theodicy, his revelation of Er, the son of Armenius. We are immortal, that is to say, our immortal reason has been prisoned through the ages in many bodies. After being punished or rewarded during the space of a thousand years for the deeds of our immediately previous lives, it was high time to be born once more, and lots were cast at our feet. We were warned by the Daughter of Necessity that the first was not to be careless of choice, and the last not to despair; that the responsibility of choice rested entirely with ourselves. Most of the lives that corresponded to the lots were of mixed conditions; he that had learnt wisdom in his previous careers was warned to choose the life that is good whether accompanied by poverty or not. But many cared only to avoid being once more what they had been already; if they could be other than they had been, that sufficed. Naturally, each of us repented of our choice when made, and fondly envied the lots of others. And, of course, we drank more or less copiously of the water of Lethe before come to our present birth, and therefore do not remember, or remember barely, our fateful choice. . . . After all, the Evolutionists tell us much the same thing; their "hereditary conscience" and "inherited tendencies" are but the doctrines of the Buddhist Karma and Platonic Reminiscence rebaptized.

The good man is he who has freed his soul as far as may be in previous existences from the taint of matter and desire, say Buddhists and Platonists. A man is good, say the Evolutionists, because his ancestors have been well whipped into orderly social ways, each in turn, by his parents and his schoolmaster, Experience.

Contentment, did I write? A strange thing, verily, this contentment. Plutarch, nay, the Stoics of all schools, including the Epicurean Stoics, instruct us that contentment consists in never desiring that which we have not, that contentment springs from educated reason. And this reason, this "active desire," directs us, leads us, to acquiesce in Custom,—the immoral custom of Nature, and the "anarch" custom of Society. As Chrysippus says, it is necessary that we are disposed in the way we are disposed, however we may be disposed; as Goethe says, submission to the inevitable is the theme of all religions. We cannot get beyond the Stoic, Spinozistic acceptance of what is, beyond the old "whatever is, is best." But why these anomalies, why the world-old sense of injustice and perennial protest? Nature has its elect; Society has its elect; God is said to have His elect—which bodies of elect do not by any means coincide. The aristocratic moralist,—and what moralist is not aristocratic?—with his disdain of the majority, has also his elect, that is to say, his disciples, and such of the dead as he recognises to have only lacked his own clear apprehension of the Whole, the Good, the Beautiful, to be his equals. "It is not possible that all shall enjoy, that all shall be cultured, delicate, or even virtuous in the refined sense; but needs must there be people of leisure, learned, highly cultured, virtuous, delicate, in whom and by whom the

rest enjoy and taste the ideal. . . . It is the coarseness of many which allows the education of one, it is the toil of the multitude which permits the noble life of a few." So Renan, one of these aristocratic moralists. So the aristocratic Greeks. So the various aristocratic, plutocratic, timocratic societies which are always included in democracies. . . . Well, there must be degree. Shakespeare's Ulysses sings the pæan of Degree, Shakespeare, who contemns the populace, since he is philosopher, and therefore aristocrat. There are even degrees in Heaven, "degrees and differences of glory laid up in Heaven," says Jeremy Taylor. But he adds, laid up "for us, according to the degrees of our care and piety and diligence." Degrees, in short, that are rewards. But the Positivist prides himself on his superiority over the Christian in that he exercises care and piety and diligence without the hope of personal reward in another world. Indeed, the sages of all schools and the saints of all religions proudly maintain that virtue is its own reward, that Heaven and Hell is of our own making. Virtue, Justice, is Happiness. Such is the judgment of the virtuous, the just, and their judgment is Truth. Plato is convinced of this. And then he hesitates, looking on the fashion of the world, concerned as legislator. He concludes that if the doctrine is false, that it is yet the best of fictions, a state-fiction to be sedulously inculcated. But this subjective Heaven, these rewards given by self to self, do not, cannot satisfy. "I myself am Heaven and Hell," sings Omar Khayyam, in unison with Lucretius. But to this doctrine that virtue is happiness and vice is misery there is one all-sufficient objection, namely, as Fielding puts it in a word, "that

it is not true." Men must needs gaze wistfully back on Golden Ages, and forward on Utopias, earthly or heavenly.

The same, continued.

I would add to what I wrote yesterday. I would expand, correct, contradict. I would say: we who suffer poverty, we who add to poverty distress of mind, of ill-balanced faculties, are no slaves of Momus, bitterly jealous of the happy few whose fortune is the fair setting of their virtues, whose form is the fair index of inward harmony. These truly are placed upon a pedestal; these are dowered with a "degree" to be admired, not envied. For Nature mocks at the revolutionary, abstract religion of equality; we are but clay in the hands of the potter, and there are vessels of honour and dishonour.

"We," have I written? Doubtless to avoid self-affirmation, conscious that the use of the first person singular is morally detestable. Or was I unconsciously hypocritical? . . . "I would correct, contradict." Indeed, what is there that I write, what is there that I read, which does not require correction, contradiction? No affirmation of the intellect is complete till you have matched it, if not reconciled it, with its contrary. "All things are double one against the other," says the Ecclesiast. It is only when I think or write in the language of the heart that antinomies do not present themselves. . . . But the heart is only a phase of the intellect. Why, then, are the heart and head ever at war?

I would correct what I said of Shakespeare as an aristocrat. He is all too wise, too sympathetic to ignore the clothes-philosophy, a philosophy which is as old, say, as Cimon, who exposed Persian spoil in the

market. Matter for keen competition were the noble trappings, sport for ridicule the nobles from whom they were stripped. He would re-echo Dyer's "My mind to me a kingdom is." . . . Alas! the mind can be an anarchy. And, in any case, the moods of intellectual sovereignty are transitory, uncertain, unsatisfactory, even as sensuous pleasures. And what though his favourite Harry the Fifth dilate upon the high advantages of a lowly lot, and envy the slave of the soil who is happy in that he is no slave of ceremony? His Harry, his Elizabeth Woodville, his Anne Boleyn, merely sigh to be other than they are, are the sport of the mirage of contrast, suffer from the radical distress of all that are human—

> But whate'er I be,
> Nor I nor any man that but man is
> With nothing shall be pleased, till he be eas'd
> With being nothing.

The most that can be positively stated of Shakespeare the man, and not Shakespeare the dramatist, is that he admired the parallel health and beauty of body and mind, even as Taine, even as the Greeks. But such admiration was, is, and shall be in proportion to the sickness, the distress, of the admirers. For they that are sound are sound unconsciously; even as children and the pretty, sportive young of animals. To be a man is to be self-conscious; and to be self-conscious is to be diseased. They that are splendidly diseased, they whose disease is further complicated with the disease of genius, imaginatively incarnate health and harmony, and are not altogether hapless, since their melancholy is not impotent.

Of what use to amplify, to correct what I wrote yesterday? Yet I will humour myself. There was that question of virtue for reward's sake, of virtue based on hope and fear, the virtue that the sages and saints, say, George Eliot and St. Francis Xavier, agree in reprobating. For instance, Plato insists that a pure religion is one from which all motives of fear are banished, and Spinoza adds, all motives of hope. Education, says Plato, is vitiated by a capital error, namely that men are taught to be just for the sake of rewards, though as a legislator, he must hold different language. "Just though the world should fail," as the Latin adage has it. Just, because justice is human perfection, says Plato, and the ideal is none the worse for being impracticable. . . . Well, let me agree that the Stoic sage is a king, that the kingdom of God is within us. Schiller's epigram against the Kantians who fear to delight in duty is justified; for pleasure is not the reward, and not the cause, but the accessory, the accompaniment of virtue. To be a flower is the reward of the flower. The virtuous obey not outward or inward laws, they are virtuous by a necessity of their nature. But the consciousness of right conduct is at best a mere negative happiness, for the sage, the solitary, the Stoic—Spinoza is a Stoic, one of those who preach the life according to Nature, informing us the while that by Nature they mean the disinterested Reason, reason that is moral and ever at war with Nature that is immoral, or at most a-moral; and the ethics of Stoics, as Vico says, are ethics of solitaries—as soon as ever he diverts his thoughts from his own rational happiness to the spectacle of humanity, descends from Unity to Dualism, to distinctions of good and evil,

to Manichæism. In anguish, he shapes Utopias for coming generations, despairing of his own. Or saddened and sobered by the spectacle of Nature's immortality, by his vision of the history of man in Nature, unable to have optimistic faith in the perfectibility of man, and of Nature through the agency of man, he postulates in accordance with instinctive sentiment another life for the virtuous, another life which shall repair the injustice and deficiency of this. . . . But, once again, to Buddhists oriental and occidental, and to the serene, well-balanced Greeks, not to be is better than existence. And to postulate another life for the just is to postulate another life for the unjust. Yet what saint—for Tertullian is no saint—would crave an immortality of joy, if the unjust are to endure a corresponding immortality of distress, whether recognised by the guilty as just, inevitable punishment, or enforced upon them. Unless, indeed, one take refuge in the suggestion, say, of Spinoza, or Renan, or Browning, that they who have only lived in and for the perishable, shall perish. Which extinction is precisely the reward desired by Buddhist saints. Moreover, it would seem that the "practical" man, living in the perishable, could well be content with life as it is, with the perishable, were he not troubled occasionally, even in the heyday of health, by the thought that death is possibly not extinction.

Immortality and personal identity.

What courage, what thoughtlessness I display in reasoning on immortality the while that personal identity is debatable, deniable. The question of personality was barely raised by the Greeks, for they absorbed the individual in the State, greatly to the admiration of the youthful Hegel, the Hegel who was in

full reaction against the excessive individualism of the Eighteenth Century, and of Matthew Arnold, who would have us attain harmony by losing ourselves in the impersonal collective consciousness, in our "best self." But Hegel, and Matthew Arnold, growing older, find Hellenism and the idea of the State inadequate, revert to personal conduct, to the idea of self-realisation by antagonism. But, again, experimental psychologists and physiologists denude me of my personality. Has not a recent disciple of the school expressly apologised for his employment of "I" and "me" in a treatise on personality, pleading in excuse that men still talk of the rising and the setting of the sun? Had I lived a century ago, Hume would at least have offered me his "sceptical solutions of sceptical doubts," and restored me my personality in some sort of working order, though it were but a mere aggregate of perceptions succeeding one another in a perpetual flux. But nowadays poor Michelet had to cry out in agony that Taine and his like were robbing him of his Ego. I suppose he resented the being considered as a mere "polypier," a coral-growth, "of images." But perchance he was querulous and ungrateful, for these same supposed robbers were ready to show that the Ego is multiple, and Michelet, had he been wise, might the rather have plumed himself on being many men in one. Well, they storm our defences one after the other; we cannot oppose the moral conscience, for as matter is only the "permanent possibility" of physical sensations, so God and the soul are but the permanent possibilities of moral emotion; for responsibility is a mere illusion due to social conditions; for character is only a general habit of feeling due to hereditary tendencies, bodily organisation, and environ-

ment. Sword to throat, we are offered the choice or materialism or spiritualism, the one of which reduces the mind, the soul, to a function of the body, and the other reduces the body to a habitude of the mind, the soul. Nay, the alternative is speedily retracted. Since we can know nothing of substance, material or spiritual, we are bidden to hold that both the one and the other are presumptuous hypotheses, that inward and outward observation, observation of the motions of matter, and observation of feelings and ideas of the mind, are irreconcilable. Dualism is Lord, and to Dualism we must bow the knee.

Moreover, if we dower ourselves with immortality, it would seem that we cannot refuse it to animals. If we pride ourselves on our conceptions of the universal, the ideal, we are informed that these conceptions are illusions, mere signs of the unknowable. The vaunted Absolute is a mere abstraction, the Infinite is only the Indefinite. We have to admit that animals are self-conscious and active, that they exercise curiosity and choice. Possessing a certain degree of intelligence, they possess will ; and if we claim free-will for ourselves, we can hardly deny it to them. Descartes indeed bestows on us an immortal soul situated in the pineal gland, and denies it to animals ; and thereby he and his Port-Royal disciples were free to vivisect animal-machines without a shudder. Should any objection be raised, he retorted that if they were not merely machines, if they possessed a soul, then "worms, oysters, and sponges" also possess a soul. Yes, how exclude lower organisms, for Nature is a whole, the higher is a development of the lower, the complex of the simple, however much the higher, the more perfect, may be previous in thought. There

are no chasms in the order of development. And thereupon I have the chance of beholding, with Goethe, phantasmagorian metamorphoses of unity; or, with Hugo, the prophet and mage, minerals yearning to be plants, plants to be animals. Or I may indulge in an Evolutionist's dream: since man is an animal, since the fabric of his mind includes animal elements, the souls of animals are immortal in and through man. In any case, if we postulate compensation, retribution, justice, we must postulate it also for animals, having regard to their fortunes.

Kantian conditions and limitations of knowledge; admission that positive science is unable to satisfy the intellectual and moral aspirations of human nature, that Immortality, Freedom, God, can neither be proved nor disproved. Faith, then, is allowable, necessary, where science fails. The data of science ever increasing with the ages, due allowance being made for the possibility of periods of retrogression and barbarity, increasing, say, till the advent of an age of ice or a world-cataclysm;—but the human mind and heart unable to rest content with the given, the known. Faith and science ever seeking to transcend the knowable, a ceaseless phantasmagoria of creeds, equally vertiginous and delirious, whether they be creeds of faith or science. . . .

If faith is probability, theoretical or practical, then probability varies in degree according to the individual, and according to the individual's season of life and his various moods during these seasons. As Lessing develops the analogy drawn by Pascal and Leibnitz between the life of humanity and the life of the individual, so Goethe applies Cousin's theory of the evolution of philosophy through four stages to the

individual and his four ages. "As children, we are Sensualists; Idealists, when we love and adorn the beloved object with qualities not intrinsic. Love halts, we doubt fidelity and become Sceptics ere we are aware. The rest of our lives is passed in Indifference, we let things be as they may, and end as Quietists, like the Indian sages." Turgot and Comte make humanity pass from theology through philosophy to positivism; and, once more, humanity is only the larger man. Ideal, unhistorical theories, these of Comte and Cousin; it were equally, nay, more reasonable to maintain that the various intellectual states exist, and have existed, side by side. Ideal, also, is their application to individual life. Idealist, Sceptic, Quietist, I have passed through these stages before my youth is at an end. Moreover, the Sceptic in me was still an Idealist, and the Quietist is still Idealist and Sceptic. I am each, am all, according to my mood; all, it may be, at once. I am a positivist, even as all men are; a theologian and metaphysician, even as all must be, consciously or unconsciously. I know not what to love, and yet I love; I doubt, and yet I doubt my doubts. Goethe was never weary of rehearsing the duty of gathering the appropriate fruits of each season of life. But I am old in youth. Sir Thomas Browne sought to console his friend on the premature death of his friend's friend and his own patient by urging that to be old in youth rendered length of days unnecessary; already had their friend divined that "there are no felicities in this world to satisfy a serious mind," and "'tis superfluous to live unto gray hairs when in a precocious temper we anticipate the virtues of them." Well indeed do I understand the impossibility of happi-

ness, but, aged in youth, I possess not the virtues of age. The virtues of age! Shall I, with increased years, add virtuous cheerfulness to my resignation? The aged are naturally Quietists, says Goethe, as I wrote above; naturally Mystics, he avers in another passage. Shall I, with increased years, add faith to resignation; will my quietism grow more and more suffused with gentle mysticism? But Alfred de Vigny with age despaired ever more and more of Idealism, and the aged Plato fell victim to a melancholy that was morose and cynical.

The love of life.

I am baffled, and weary. Doubtless it is wisdom not to raise insoluble problems. Doubtless it is wisdom to obey Goethe's *Gedenke zu leben*, to think not of death, but of life. The sage, the free man, thinks of death least of all; and his wisdom is a meditation not of death, but of life. So Spinoza. And Plato rejoins: the separation and release of the soul from the body is the study of philosophers, wisdom is the meditation of death. Moreover, the meditation of death is equivalent to the meditation of life. For the Christian meditates on death that he may live, now and hereafter; the Buddhist that he may cease to live now and hereafter; the Spinozist, meditating on life, meditates on eternity, seeks to transcend the finite and personal, seeks to lose himself in the Infinite, the Impersonal.

Gedenke zu leben! Love to live! In the eternal, or the perishable? For the phrase leaves open the choice of interpretations; for the advice might come appropriately from either my good or my bad angel. Instinct leads men to seek power, wealth, esteem. Men grasp at the transitory; they strive to bind

Proteus ; they imagine stability in the universal flux. They are the slaves of inadequate ideas ; they love to live. Let them live their lives, let them strenuously persist in being. And when age comes upon them, then let them look back on their lives, and they will resume their meditation in an "All is Vanity." They will find that past joys remembered are pain. They will congratulate themselves on their capacity of forgetfulness. They will allow that happiness is always of the future. Perchance they find that, if past joys remembered are pain, past pains remembered are joy. In any case, they will allow that happiness is always of the past or future, a mirage, an unconscious idealisation. The present is all ; but we are never happy in the present.

Gedenke zu leben ! But one of the elements of negative happiness is this capacity of forgetfulness. As I have already seen, for Herder, not least of the luminaries of Athenian Weimar, remembrance of the detail of his days at Weimar was the most exquisite of tortures. Whensoever, like Dante, we enter upon a terrestrial Paradise, needs must we first bathe in waters of Lethe, that we may forget the evil we have done and suffered. It is true that Dante is further privileged to taste of the fount of Eunoë, which restores the memory of good deeds done. Good deeds ? But, once more, good results from evil, evil from good, and good deeds have good and evil consequences. Nor will Spinoza and Spencer allow us to judge good deeds by intentions ; for that, says Spinoza, were to fall into the error of popular, inadequate morality. The Good, good deeds are those which procure a pleasurable emotion to the self, and thus aid its conservation. But good deeds that are executed with pleasure are not, rightly speaking, moral at

all, says Kant. In any case, the distinction of good and evil—absolute, not relative—is only a figment of the human imagination, is not reasonable, insists Spinoza.

Gedenke zu leben, love to live in the eternal order! Quit false goods for that which alone is good, which alone is happiness! But the eternal is the necessary, as the Greeks divined when they throned Necessity above the gods, as the Egyptians, the masters of our masters the Greeks, divined when they proclaimed a "Nuter," a Power, a First Cause —impersonal withal—with which any, or all, of the gods can be identified, but which was other than any god, or all the gods. It is possible, perchance, to reverence the necessary, but how shall I love it? And is not Order also a necessary figment of the human imagination, an efflorescence of anthropomorphism? There is a kind of theological comfort in the conceptions of Order and Law. That which is easy to imagine is pleasant, and the philosopher and the moralist, who in this age of the world find it easy to imagine law and order, readily and gladly think to perceive analogies between Thought and Being, to perceive order in that Nature which is a mockery of their order, their laws of thought.

Gedenke zu leben! Goethe means by his parœnetic maxim that we should cease to paralyse action by self-analysis, that we should dismiss otiose and insoluble questions of metaphysics and religion, and think only how to act, how to do our business in this life. We are born for action; it is our business to do our business. We are to act, and not to stay to consider why we act. The solution, in short, of the problem of life which Carlyle so gladly adopts from his master;

solution, or rather, advice to resolutely avoid posing the problem, advice which neither the adviser nor the advised follows, or can follow. . . . Well, Plato, in his search for the definition of justice,—search which led him to postpone justice to another life—finds at least a shadow of justice in the economic division of labour which requires each man to do his business and not another's. What, then, is my business? I am too complicated; a very mosaic of tendencies, potentialities. Yet I must return to the world of action at the end of my year of liberty. . . . Nay, let me not be bitter, let me not fall into the tone of them that are in revolt against society and its conventions. It would seem that the chafing yoke that I have borne these six long years of the life called practical has left a sore that is not yet healed, but let the prelude of this meditation have its corresponding symphony, symphony of *abstine*, *sustine; sustine*, *abstine*.

Physicians of the soul.

I have been listening to-day to Epictetus, "friend of the Gods," "assessor of Jove," to that Epictetus who, in his eagerness to adhere to the will of Providence, cries on Jove, on Providence, on Destiny, to guide him. Destiny, Nature, Fortune—so many names of the same god variously revealing his power, says Seneca; so many names of the Unknown, say modern scientists. I have been listening to Seneca, who was sincerely unctuous when he reclined in his study to pen a moral exhortation or consolation, relieved for the time from his perilous, degrading, inconsistent opportunism as a statesman and man of the world; sincerely good as it is easy to be good when the world and its claims and necessary accommodations are set aside and forgotten.

I have been listening to the Roman preachers who disdained mere questions of metaphysics and cosmogony as fit only for unpractical, logomachical Greeks, hair-splitters, *sectores cumini;* who employed indiscriminately the moral precepts of the conflicting schools, precisely because these precepts were common to all, and common to all, as due to the common judgment of common sense. In short, I have been consulting professional physicians of the soul.

Antiphon the orator, says Plutarch, driven from Athens, not knowing how to apply his eloquence at Corinth, turned to the cure of souls. He posted a notice on his door that here dwelt one whose profession it was to comfort the sorrowful, and heal their wounds by words. Surely his practice, as moral physician, should have been large. But it seems that, on trial, he judged his new calling unworthy of his powers, and abandoned it to give lessons in rhetoric once again. Did no one need consolation ; or were the Corinthians sagely sceptical of mercenary rhetorical consolations ? Dion Chrysostom, popular lecturer and preacher errant on permanent mission, consulting casuist, laments that leeches of the soul, like those of the body, are only called for in time of extremity. It is only when health or wealth is gone, he sighs, that the thought of consulting the moral philosopher occurs. Commonplace that is ever appropriate for the preacher's use. But there were professional ministers of comfort under the Roman Empire who presented themselves, it would seem, without waiting to be called, whensoever they judged their services might be in requisition, professional consolers who had at their fingers' end fit discourse for all circumstances and conditions of men,

who were skilled in the Anatomy of Misfortune. What a theme! Crantor could not exhaust it; nay, it was even a richer theme than flies and gnats and baldness, whereon ingenious rhetoricians in prose and verse were wont to discourse so copiously. But Cicero, who could write the Consolation of Old Age, and who professed to have in readiness the philosophic remedies proper to console affliction, was inconsolable when his Tullia died, and confessed as much. And was the wife of Plutarch consoled when her philosophic husband reasoned with her as thus: when we had no child, we had no occasion for complaint against Fortune, and now that we have lost our child we are but returned to our former condition. Unanswerable was Solon's retort to his friends who judged open grief unworthy of the philosopher: I weep precisely because it is idle to weep.

But I am fallen into Montaigne's or Burton's vein, and all beside the purpose. Of what use to tell myself that reason speedily declares its bankruptcy when the heart calls on it? Time, indeed, may heal the wounds that death of friends inflict, but time is powerless to cure the maladies of sensibility and thought. The good man has his genius to console his heart's distress, says Apuleius,—for genius, we moderns read conscience. But it is not enough to possess a conscience guiltless as human conscience can be guiltless; no modern can so loftily, so serenely absolve himself at the tribunal of his conscience as the Stoics did. These Stoics made laws unto themselves, and sat at the tribunal as their own judges. Good fortune was the gift of the gods, but wisdom was of man's own fashioning. "Let Jove give life and wealth, and I will give myself serenity." Such

was their pride. But these were magnanimous vaunts in moods of peace—that peace which is not of a man's own making.

The remedy of Stoicism and Epicureanism.

Utraque secta ad otium diversa via mittit: the life of serene tranquillity was to be attained alike by the disciples of Zeno and Epicurus. The Stoic, with his voluntary submission to the universal order, fronted death and the thought of death in more virile fashion; the Epicurean, with his theory of conventionality, could not take sanctuary in his conscience and count on the eternal laws of justice; the Stoic conceived himself under the care of fatal Providence, while the Epicurean claimed free-will and dismissed the gods from the management of the universe—but, with principles at variance, they were one in their desire for peace, for tranquillity. Peace to be gained by effort; desire, doubtless, rather than fruition of peace. In their concessions to practical life, for life necessarily requires compromise between principles and practice, they were akin,—especially when Epicurus was interpreted by the Romans, Stoical by instinct, wholly practical. And they were alike in their ideal of life, in their religion—a religion of the void. The austere, grave Epicureanism of the Master was a conventual rule of life, an asylum of quietism to the timid, the discouraged, the baffled. And as Leopardi insisted, Stoicism also was a doctrine appropriate to the timid of head and faint of heart. Indolence, innocent languor, indeed, is the note of Epicureanism; but this indolence is only to be attained by renunciation, by Stoical contentment with little, by resolute restriction of desires and needs. Strip thyself voluntarily of all that fortune can assail. If thou hast

rank and wealth, and mayest not forgo them for duty's sake, live as though they were not thine. They are not thou, and their loss cannot affect thee. So would the Stoic speak. And the Epicurean way of life is only an æsthetic Stoicism, a Stoical quietism based on the conviction of the vanity of action. Happiness is the health of body and soul, sanity—that is to say, exemption from bodily pain and mental disquiet, freedom from insensate action and selfish passion.

Here was a doctrine that remained, in its Epicurean form, virtually unchanged for seven hundred years, till the invasion of the barbarians. A way of life, and not a creed; for creeds must be capable of, must suffer, development—development which necessarily implies an apogee, and a consequent decline, or constant reformation. A positivistic way of life, in that the Master, though he had availed him of the atomistic theory of Democritus as a ready, convenient febrifuge, an opportune remedy against the fear of death, yet strenuously advised the dismissal of all metaphysical questions as painful, insoluble, inane. A quietistic way of life, in that to quench not only the desires of the flesh, but also of the heart, was proclaimed the beginning of wisdom.

But, after all, did Epicureanism escape the fate of philosophies and creeds? Granted that there was an Epicurean Church with fixed rules of life formulated in manuals, all innovation in and interpretation of which, says Numenius, was regarded as impiety. Still the majority of Epicureans were secular and eclectic. The Romans, for example, Stoic by instinct, Epicurean by accident, shaped the doctrine to the fashion of their temperaments. Atticus was past master in the timid prudential morality of the school; but contrast the

sumptuous luxury of Atticus with the daily half-obol which sufficed Epicurus. The doctrine, moreover, was Janus-faced, and worldlings could find ready excuse for their orgies in the interpretation of Metrodorus, Epicurean "of the sty." Cassius is an Epicurean, and yet a man of action, a hater of tyrants—like our Godwins and Shelleys, Hazlitts and Landors, Hugos and Swinburnes—but not content to slay the tyrant in words only, doubtless because his attention was not divided, like theirs, between tyrants of the throne and tyrants of the altar. *Carpe diem*, enjoy the fleeting moment, says Horace, thinking to be Epicurean; and turns to Stoicism after a fit of superstition,—unless he is laughing at the credulity of friend or reader, himself incorrigibly Epicurean the while, playing with fancied conversion. Petronius opens his veins theatrically, jesting to the end, elegantly Epicurean, carelessly heroic. And the moderns read their own spirit into the letter. Montaigne reinforces Epicureanism with prolegomena of Pyrrhonism. Gassendi sees in Epicureanism nothing but the atomistic philosophy. Molière, disciple of Gassendi, preaches and practises Epicureanism till sorrow and disquiet impel him to write a "Misanthrope." Voltaire is the contrary of Gassendi; he ridicules the Epicurean physics and delightedly lauds the ethics. The Epicureans of to-day are dilettanti, cosmopolitans, pessimists, who find vivid pleasure the sweeter for its very transitoriness, rare joy the brighter for its background of common human misery—Epicureans whom the Master would have plied with his placid epigrams. . . . But, of a truth, that marble in the Louvre is fit symbol of Epicureanism—of any philosophy or creed—that Janus-head, Epicurus on the one side, and

Metrodorus on the other. *Homo duplex;* and the same doctrine may serve the angel and the beast.

Be ye perfect, even as the gods who toil not, sorrow not, are passionless. So spoke Epicurus. Be ye perfect, worship the divinity with ye, voluntarily conform to the moral order, said the Stoics. Perfection by asceticism, in either case. St. Jerome could offer Epicurus as an example to Christians, Epicurus the ascetic, the vegetarian. But he rejects the Epicurus who would have us be simple and lowly of mind, willingly ignorant and uncultured, content with right conduct. For Christians, it would seem, must needs taste the bitter fruit of the tree of knowledge; they must needs resent the closing of the schools of pagan Rhetoric against them by Julian the Emperor. Epicurus counselled seclusion from the world, but Dante the Christian, he who knew only too well the vanity of political action, yet branded Pope Celestine the Franciscan quietist, *che fece per viltade il gran rifiuto*, who shrank from tyranny because his heart was gentle. . . . Alas, *homo duplex*, man is double, angel and beast linked together. Double? Multiple, rather; a very bundle of contradictions. Pagans have been Christians, Christians are mainly pagan, materialistic, least alien to their creed when only domestically materialistic. If you renounce the world, you are Christian and Pagan; if you act in the world, you are also Christian and Pagan. You are child by descent of the Barbarians who abandoned their austere forests and primitive virtues to conquer and dwell among decadent Christians that were Pagans, of the Barbarians who were more pagan than the Pagans when they declared themselves Arians or Christians. You

are child by descent of the Barbarians, who linked in loose fashion Feudalism and Chivalry and Christianity together. And child, by education, of Puritanic Jews and artistic Greeks. How reduce this tangled complexity to order, how recognise my duty! . . . Submission, acceptance? Yes. Renunciation of personal desires?—a further degree of perfection. Self-devotion, self-sacrifice?—the last degree. But for whom? For what idea?

The same continued: Lucretius.

The conventual quietism of the Epicurean Church could not content Lucretius. He could not linger in the Garden; could not live the peaceful delitescent life of kindliness and friendship, of nonchalance and sanctity which his loved master advocated and practised. That physical theory of which Epicurus indolently availed himself as a ready, sufficient means to banish all fear of the capricious providence of the gods, all fear of immortality, that atomistic philosophy which the Roman Stoics, intent on positive morality alone, could adopt with little change, on condition that it should remain in the background, Lucretius must explore, not in doubt but in fervent conviction, must expand, must chant even as a Parmenides, an Empedocles had chanted the laws they discerned in Nature. It mattered not that he was violating the rules of Epicurus's guild, that to study systems of philosophy was to trouble serenity, that culture was a hindrance to holy happiness. He fain would possess the peace of which his master spoke, but the master's piercing, relentless logic fascinated him all too much. Did he hope that, by expounding the method, he would sooner attain the result, the peace which the master

won so readily, and of which the disciple despaired? Did he hope that, by ardent preaching and proselytising, he would know at length the peace which he proclaimed? Unhappy Lucretius! To be a tender, noble poet was of itself to be dedicated to misery. But to be a poet and a physicist at once was to be doubly wretched. And he knew it not! And he fondly hoped that physics would heal him of his poetry, his melancholy!

He was convinced, indeed, that the method was true; but had he won that happy, placid peace he vaunts to have won, he had been surely silent. They that are happy speak not of their happiness. Passionately he pleads for nonchalance, immoderately for moderation; stressfully he counsels calm, much as Carlyle thunders a gospel of silence. With the air of a Prometheus, chained but indomitable, exulting in unchartered liberty of thought, he prophesies the peace which he himself cannot attain. Had not Epicurus pointed out the path to peace, and was not peace wholly lacking to himself, to his countrymen, lost as they were in ambition and civil strife? Did not he and they require to convince themselves of the dolorous insanity of love, and superstition, and the restless desire of happiness? Here was a doctrine that brought calm to man and nature alike; to man, because its comprehension stilled perforce all mad desires, to nature, to man's vision of nature, by its revelation of her fatal, unchanging order. Man's passion, man's melancholy would yield before the true knowledge of nature's laws; to know nature was to know oneself. To know nature was to be able to look on all things with a quiet mind, was to free oneself from dread of death and immortality,

from the passions that plunge men in a present, unfabled Hell. . . . But his own sight is troubled; he raves against superstition like a demoniac fearing relapse into the power of the evil thing he hates. The serene attitude of the Greeks is not his, nor yet the facile incredulity of his compatriots, contemporaries, or predecessors. It was idle to combat those errors and terrors of the official religion to which no "old woman," says Cicero, was subject, and yet he fearfully denounces this religion of fear, and marshals arguments against the dread of death that might well increase that dread. Elate with the hope of annihilation, his hope is agony. He is ever at war with himself and his creed, for he is a poet. Intensely emotional, he appeals to humanity of all time, and this because, as a poet, he cannot narrow himself to a philosophic theory. He is a poet in spite of his philosophy; a witness of truth just so long as he is chanting his sorrow; inconsistent, self-refuting, precisely because a philosopher.

Lucretius seeks to comfort himself with the belief that death is happy insensibility, that the fear of death is wholly illogical, unreasonable. Since death, then, is nothingness, needs must he "meditate on life," and love to live; but he cannot love life, for the desire of happiness is also an unreasonable, illogical instinct, for passion is pain, and all things, to the tranquil and the passionate alike, are monotonous and wearisome. Nor does the fatalistic Stoic fare better. The Stoic and the Epicurean alike are individualists; their ethics are the ethics of solitaries, of hermits. The Stoic and the Epicurean are ascetics; they seek to take sanctuary from an evil world in their own hearts, and find therein nothing but vanity and emptiness. Thrust back upon them-

selves, they vainly seek for self-deliverance ; their self-consciousness is despair.

The consolation of Nature.

Self-conscious, I find no consolation in Nature. For I can only receive from her that which I give to her ; she is only myself "writ large," and unconscious of warring antinomies. Yet as an artist, I fail not to admire the great unconscious artist. It is mine to pay glad homage to my Lady Nature ; strange only that this homage finds no expression in these pages ! It is as though I were some Provençal Troubadour who should mutely gaze upon his careless mistress all the day, and celebrate her not in hours of night and absence ; for what am I that I should stammer her praise even in secret ? To shape a song in verse or prose while in her presence were to gaze with less attention, were to be less absorbed in ecstasy, were to descend to a lower perfection. To phrase my reveries would be to phrase and deepen pain ; for my mistress is cruel, cruel because indifferent. A little while, and I shall be banished from her bower-court to the loveless haunts of men, with seldom chances of brief return from banishment. A few more years, and I shall return no more ; but if she be ever fair, she will be ever indifferent to other loves then, as now to me. And in these night-watches that part me from her presence for but a few hours, I utter no word of love. For thoughts of love are thoughts of death ; death and love are inseparable, one god with two aspects, nameless in unity, hailed in diversity. In place of marvelling at her beauty I put mad questions to the void. I rehearse the myriad guesses of her courtiers dead and living, myriad guesses that still are few and ever the

same, a slender set of guesses that endlessly repeat, like decimals, *ad nauseam*. She is the one that is all things, is Love, is War, whisper modern pantheists and they who wrote the Litany of Ra. Nay, she lives and acts in accord with a moral principle, whisper Matthew Arnold and they who wrote the Proverbs of Phtah-hotep. We know not that, but surely she is creature, emanation of a First Cause unknown, unknowable, impersonal, ineffable, whisper Mr. Herbert Spencer and they who wrote the Book of the Dead.

Tragic heroism.

So long as I remained *in sæculo*, among the world of men, I was a tragic hero struggling with an adverse destiny, a tragic hero without an audience, unexposed to sympathy or ridicule, a tragic hero who should be a supernumerary. But now I am self-discharged and in retreat, wondering to what end I was haled perforce upon the stage, wondering what part I am to play on my return. Nay, I am a tragic hero still, and my tragic error, my "necessary error of a noble character" —let the flattering epithet pass—is and was, doubtless, my excess of thought. The drama of faith and doubt ever proceeds within me. In sooth I should be less hapless were I able, on the one hand, not to think, able to harbour self-conceit and confidence, able to believe, like other men, that I believe, able to believe comfortable, appropriate beliefs, or, on the other hand, able to be a frivolous, facile, self-satisfied sceptic. But I am hero of a tragedy in which the chorus is all in all. I exhale not my sorrows, all too eager to listen to the consolations proffered by the chorus, chorus within my heart of men that are dead and men that deem themselves alive. And this chorus is the voice of Nature,

is a chorus that divides itself and stands apart this way and that, voicing Nature's antimonies. Each thesis is met by an antithesis ; the antistrophe ever contradicts the strophe :—

"Thou shouldst submit, for he that submits 'need act no tragic part' ; thou shouldst joyfully submit, remembering the while that thy submission is 'submission to a government of the gods.'" Whereon the semi-chorus rejoins : "Such Stoic counsel is idle ; for the government is an anarchy, for Ormuzd, Prince of Good, is ever at war with Ahriman, Prince of Evil. Thou must indeed be a strenuous, valiant partisan of Ormuzd, but think not to escape the temptations of Ahriman, and remember the while that the combat is endless and undecisive, that Ormuzd can only exist so long as his adversary wars against him."

"Thou art happy so long as thou art conscious of right conduct." "Nay, thou art doomed, however virtuous, to misery, for thou art a limitation of the Idea, the One, and limitation is suffering. Thou art impeded by thyself, by outer nature, and the world of men ; but to resent impediments is neither wise nor holy."

"Seek diligently Truth, and thou shalt find Truth and Happiness." "Nay, it is not given to the bounded human mind to comprehend Truth, but only truths, partial, contradictory, truths that are errors, necessary errors. Thou shrinkest from limiting thyself to one aspect of Truth, from narrowing thyself to some useful, force-giving prejudice ; thou fearest to be a dupe : but canst thou hope to embrace and reconcile all partial truths ? Nor is it given to the human heart to stay the fleeting moment of illusive happiness ; for,

once more, thou art finite and yet wouldst compass the infinite; nothing but all can satisfy thee, and almost nothing serves to make thee wretched."

"Think not of thyself, for self-love is ever baffled; lose thyself that thou mayst find thyself in others, for universal love is happiness and freedom; Nature, ever straining towards the better and the best, designs the happiness of all things, be thou her glad coadjutor, free with the freedom of moral activity." "Yes, self-love is ever baffled, but think not that altruistic love fares better. Nature and Man are powerless to accomplish their designs, to realise the infinite in the finite. And further, do not fondly dower Nature with thy own designs and thoughts; Nature has no designs, Nature is Necessity, Nature is ever the same, balancing quality by defect, gain by loss. Thou hast illusions of progress and freedom, thou hast desires of self-sacrifice; and needs must thou be the dupe of these illusions, needs must thou renounce thyself."

The remedy of solitude.

Baffled self-lover, let me arraign myself. . . . Isolation, because of difference. Will that serve to formulate my solitude of the past years? I was humble, as conscious of defect; there was nothing "dæmonic" in me, no personal magnetism and fascination. None sought me out, and I would not thrust myself on another's tolerance. I was unable not to love fair surroundings, and would not that my bare, unlovely retreat should be visited. What was conversation? An interchange of trifling chatter on trifling subjects. The rules of society, possibly with reason, preclude serious discussion, and life was serious to me. Why should I desire to discover a friend, a *second* self? One, of the

kind, was already quite sufficient. A friend, then, with whom I could agree to differ? I needed none such; a sophist, I could readily argue against myself. Nor did I wish to teach or inspire doubts in another. The masters of doubt were legion, and I cared not to swell their train. "Leave thou thy sister, when she prays, her early heaven, her happy views"—and also, leave thou thy brother to his content and fancied surety. It was better far to consume one's own smoke; argument was interminable, and only served to reveal the temperament of the arguer. To quit the world for my solitude was to exchange the slight possibility of acquiring friends, whom, if acquired by whatsoever unlikely accident, I could certainly not have aided in their time of spiritual or material need, for the vast society of the dead. Nay, I could converse in solitude not only with the elect of humanity's dead, but with the living whose bodily company could never be mine. I needed not to be abashed. Nay, forsooth, the greatest among them must wait in the ante-chamber till such time as I should think good to grant them audience, till I should have made my choice among them. It was veritable madness to desire other company.

Isolation, because of difference; though isolation is severance, and severance is pain. I was tolerant wholly, for men must be what they may. I expected no sympathy; I was different, and it was folly to chafe because difference implied isolation, to desire that others should be in sympathy with me. How could I wish that any should resemble me? . . . If I were a lover, should I expect or desire another to see the beauty that I saw in my mistress? I have loved certain

pictures. Who saw in them the beauty that I saw? Men deigned a passing glance, and then forgot. Critics pointed out defects—what cared I; whatever is, is necessarily limited, and qualities comport corresponding defects. I knew the defects as well as they; but I loved, and was therefore blind, voluntarily blind. As with the beautiful, so with the good, which to me ever presented itself under the aspect of the beautiful. How expect sympathy in my creeds and cults? "Wide is the range of words"; vast is the variety of temperaments. *Est-ce par raison que vous aimez*, loving, do we love on grounds of reason? asks Pascal. And to essay an explanation of your love to another was but to reason. I loved the Christian idea; but I could not justify my love by reason. I shrank instinctively from the society of those who did not dare to think; I was different from them. But I shrank still more from those who dared; reason is but scepticism, and I was other than a cold, remorseless reasoner. *Le cœur a des raisons que la raison ignore*, the heart has reasons which reason ignores, says Pascal again, and I could not silence my heart. It was the heart that made me a poet, though a voiceless poet. *Pectus facit theologum;* it was the heart that made me a Christian —though a Christian without a creed. Solitude was best, *beata solitudo—sola beatitudo.* In solitude alone I could be in communion with those who had doubted all things, had doubted their doubts, had listened to their hearts which made them hope and trust, though reason utterly denied.

But am I not involuntarily idealising my past? I was to have denounced my solitude, and behold I could fain wish that the present was as tolerable as the past.

But I came hither because my life was intolerable. I came hither to seek consolation, to reconstruct my life, to reason out if might be a faith. But while I am further confirmed in my belief that reason is vanity, I have also learned to distrust my unreasonable faith and love. I no longer blindly love; clear-sighted at length, I love not at all. If it is folly to seek consolation in philosophy, it is equal folly to pay heed to the yearnings of my heart. The mind is shackled within the dungeon of experience, and vainly strives to break its bonds and pass into freedom. And the heart, likewise, only divines perfection because it is prisoned for all the hours of its beating in imperfection. The heart contrasts that which should be, which cannot be, with that which is; its wretchedness is nothing more than the sense of will impeded, and to be impeded, to the end. Perchance the wisdom of the mind would be to recognise and accept its limits; the wisdom of the heart, to renounce hope and desire.

The remedy of altruism.

But what of the salvation by altruism? I am isolated, necessarily isolated, as being different from others, as being "exceptional." But to consider oneself an exception is to be in the way of cunning self-flatteries and Jean-Jacques sophistries. Can any one not wholly self-deluded, self-sophisticated, tolerate self-contemplation for long? In probing the depths of personality, do we not come upon a foul slough of animality, of "will-to-live" at the expense of others, and draw back in dismay and disgust? In my days of youthful generosity, indeed, "I thought nobly of the soul." So did Malvolio, ludicrously distraught by egoism. How can I outstep the circle of selfishness?

Forsooth, on Spinozistic principles, to love self reasonably is to know self, to know self is to know God, to know God is to love God, to love God is to love humanity, to love humanity is—to love self.

Let me ascend in thought from the "den" of human use and wont, pass from darkness to the light, and gaze upon the Sun of the Idea, even at the risk of being blinded by excess of light. There, in the darkness, did I not fashion a bugbear of selfishness, and shrink from it in abhorrence? But I cannot be selfish, even if I would. Am I not a creature of Nature, and does not Nature inevitably inspire us, dupe us, with altruistic desires? Or look at the matter from another point of view: as a natural being, on Spinoza's showing, I am a mere ephemeral mode of substance, mechanically determined, merged in the natural order, lost precisely because I exist, a negation in that I am determination; as a moral being, on Spinoza's showing again, or that of the Spinozistic Fichte, my self-consciousness is lost in the universal self-consciousness, my individuality absorbed in the rational, moral order.

Saadi tells us that Abu Yezid heard a voice that said, "Thy Thou is still with thee; if thou wilt attain unto Me, quit thyself and come." Quit myself! Strip myself of worldly goods? That were soon done. I possess but a musical instrument, a few prints, a thousand books. Well, "they do most by books who could do much without them." But strip thyself of learning, and even of understanding. Well, knowledge is pain, and understanding is vanity. In any case, I shall soon cease to be selfish; a little while, and I shall go, like the dying Plotinus, to "bear the divine

within me to the divine in the universe," that is to say, I shall merge in the unconscious Absolute. Nay, in life itself, as a moral being, I must seek deliverance from the senses ; and in proportion as I free myself from this body of death, as I hate my life, I quit myself and come, I attain to death in life, to absorption. . . . To think that I desire peace, and yet resent that annihilation of personality which is the necessary condition of peace ! . . .

I am weary of this monody of vain search. Resignation I know, but not serenity. Loneliness and impotence and poverty I can, and must, accept ; but how shall I endure discordancy of thought ? "Men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes" ; and haply, I judge meanly because my lot is mean. Let me forget myself as far as may be, or at least disengage the melancholy of thought from the melancholy of adverse circumstance by ceasing to descant on my own ill-fortunes. Let me renew the quest, and review, with such impersonality and impartiality of judgment as is possible, the causes and supposed remedies of melancholy ; not shifting and drifting in despair from point to point as heretofore, but progressing in some orderly fashion—whither ? . . . Nay, I cannot pose to myself in advance a plan, a method ; for this would imply presumption that I am able to pose the whole problem, and thereby presumption that I am in the way of solving it.[1]

[1] [It is to be understood that the division of this diary into parts is not signified in the manuscript otherwise than by the intervention of a blank page.—EDITOR.]

PART II

The "malady of the century."

At the beginning of this century men prided themselves on their privileged possession of a moral malady, *Ennui*, Melancholy. To be weary of realities after experience was to be distinguished from the commonalty ; to be weary, to be disenchanted, disillusioned before experience, was to be distinguished among the distinguished ; to be weary of ideals, convinced that ideals even if realised could not satisfy, was supreme distinction. As the century advanced men grew weary of their weariness, addicted themselves wholly to positive action, to the pursuit of wealth. Melancholy was hushed under the reign of Utilitarianism and Industrial Progress. The pursuit of wealth, the struggle for gold, the strident demands for *Panem et Circenses* remains unabated, nay, exasperated—witness contemporary Germany, pessimistic and withal supremely positive—but the malady has broken out once again, at the end of the century we have returned, as in a cycle, to the state of feeling that marked its beginning. But the malady has returned in an aggravated form, it is above all a malady of thought, it is the distress of men who logically deduce the conclusions of the doctrines—hardly to be gainsaid, so vast is the body of evidence—of the Natural Scientists, doctrines, for example, of the relativity of

knowledge, of determinism, which the Scientists renew and confirm by their own methods.

At the beginning of the century youths posed and vapoured in imitation of René and Childe Harold. They were victims of a mere affectation, which was not deep-rooted, which passed away with youth. They were furnished with models so superb, so colossal, so beyond imitation, that would-be imitators inevitably encountered ridicule, and from fear of ridicule, from self-love, more or less speedily accommodated themselves to mediocrity. But I see no literary models of melancholy like to inspire imitation nowadays. As Obermann had no imitators, so Amiel can have none. It is the ideal figure fashioned by a genius, the ideal figure who resumes the confused aspirations and discouragements of contemporary society that evokes imitation. A type is more or less universal, is a work of art, is a portrait in which the beholders can recognise some or many of their own lineaments. But the self-portraiture of an exceptional individual, an Obermann, a Maurice de Guérin, an Amiel, is individual only. These and their like have not only no imitators, but even no disciples, such as any ethical philosopher, be he pessimistic or optimistic, who propounds a scheme of salvation, is sure to have. These do but express their own strange idiosyncrasy, their unlikeness to other men. After their death, not till after their death, some potent critic, discovering in them a subject for the display of ingenuity, stirs a little wave of interest. The wave dies away; attention is diverted to some newer moral, pathological curiosity. In short, present-day melancholy is not due to the imitation of any literary "type" in which is resumed the "state of soul" of a generation.

The "malady of the century" has been explained as a vague distress due to the forced inaction that followed the stirring martial years of the generation which fought for, or against, the Empire. Was it not rather the vague distress caused by the failure of the Revolution to realise its principles of liberty, equality, fraternity, the dolorous reaction after disillusioned enthusiasm? And as the bankruptcy of social ideals and aspirations cast a deep gloom over the men that were young while the century was young, so they that think in this generation of mine are saddened by the bankruptcy of the vaunted industrial progress which has only accentuated the gulf between the "two nations" of rich and poor, of "those who have" and "those who have not," which Plato and Machiavelli marked as ever at war within Society. But the malady of the century is rather the malady of all the centuries; chronic, if varying in form. René is independent of the Revolution, René is the brother of the pre-revolutionary Werther and St. Preux. . . . Nay, that is a short horizon. What of the world-haters of India, oriental and occidental contemners of matter, of the flesh, ascetic recluses of all times and climes? What of Job's vain call on Jehovah to justify his ways, Prometheus's lofty scorn of the tyrant Zeus? A Lucretius fled for refuge from religion to the study of the laws of nature. But we, heirs of all the ages, vainly seek consolation and a refuge, now that nature's laws are known, now that the world is discovered, they say, to be godless, now that Necessity is enthroned.

Roman ennui.

Annæus Serenus applies to Seneca, lay director of consciences and professional consoler, for spiritual help.

Seneca sympathetically poses the case as though it were his own ; for the moral physician, like Plato's bodily physician, must have experienced in himself the maladies he would cure. Annæus Serenus is in a state of languor ; he is neither sound nor sick. He fears that continuance of his distress does but make him cherish it the more. His heart is in a constant state of hesitation, like the wavering tongue of the balance, neither resolutely straining to the good, nor yet declining to evil. He loves, he fain would love contentment, simplicity, mediocrity of fortune ; yet the sight of a rich man's magnificence and splendour is wont to stir in him an envy that he scorns to feel, but cannot banish. He returns to his frugal home, not morally the worse, but sadder. Should not he, also, pursue the active life which brings wealth and consideration, he asks himself. His Stoic masters, indeed, elect the contemplative life, but inconsistently bid the disciple turn to action. But no sooner does he essay action than he is convinced once more of the worthlessness and vanity of action, and is driven back again on the contemplative life. He will attend to his own concerns alone, and pursue a tranquil course. But in solitude he reads of men who won glory in action, and is fired with enthusiasm. He will emulate, even should it profit nothing. He will place himself at the beck and call of others, will combat in the senate-house, and war against iniquity. But, he asks himself, is it not better, after all, to study the nature of things, and, study ended, to write an epoch-making book ? Would not that be noblest action ? Yet to what end ? Death is the inheritance of all, be they unknown or famous ; and fame brings care and trouble. Better to while away the hours in busy idleness, in writing merely for one's gratifica-

tion. . . . Nay, he confesses, he is weak of purpose, unable to read his heart and discover his true desire. Perchance men might attain to wisdom, he thinks, if they would cease to suppose, in blind self-conceit, that they had already attained it. But though conscious that he lacks wisdom, and thus in the way of wisdom, how is he yet to become wise, to reach the goal? He is out at sea, drifting hither and thither, sick or apathetic, even though it is calm around him and no storm threatens. How may he reach the haven of peace?

Thereupon Seneca generalises the malady of ennui, resuming many modern symptoms. Fickleness, instability, constant change of purpose; disgust of the present good, idealisation of the past. A languor often too deep to allow of fickleness, a listless continuation of habits formed, an inability to change. Brooding self-dissatisfaction, timidity of desire, speedy discouragement at obstacles. Fitful confidence, fitful despondency. Scrupulous fears of beginning, scrupulous repentance of that which is begun. Resentful withdrawal from action; inaction found to be a torment, solitude a burden. Contempt of others succeeded by contempt of self. An irritability of the soul, exasperated by any and every remedy applied, as a wound is irritated by the handling it craves. A restlessness as of one who ever turns from side to side on his couch, vainly seeking repose. Vain efforts to escape from self and self-torment by flight from cities to natural solitude, by flight from solitude, when reached, to the bustle of the cities that have been left. Endless desires to be otherwhere and otherwise; but change of scene not followed by change of self.

As remedy for Annæus Serenus and his like, Seneca—as might be expected—counsels action. But when a

Lucilius, a Paulinus, men of action, confess to him their ennui, their weariness of action, he counsels seclusion and contemplation. The Stoical system is assuredly convenient—for professional consolers of others.

To end the endless fluctuations of uncertainty, the vain attempts to win oblivion of self, knowledge of self is all-sufficient, and knowledge of self is knowledge of the laws of nature, say Lucretius and the modern scientists. But the laws of nature are profoundly immoral. The Brahman myth of the creation of the world by the Evil Spirit, the Persian myth of the eternal combat of Ahriman and Ormuzd, are significant. Plato, that he might justify God, must limit his omnipotence : "far fewer are the goods of human life than its evils, and it is the good only that we must set down to him, —for the evil we must seek any cause rather than God." A Bayle surreptitiously inclines to Manichæism ; a John Stuart Mill posthumously acknowledges its reasonableness. To know the laws of nature is to know that we are necessary products, and in turn necessary agents, causing only that which we must cause. Our fairest morality is only a protest against these laws ; our fairest desires are baseless fantasies, not to be realised ; our deepest joy expresses itself in the form of tears. Study nature, and a longing for deliverance from nature, for death, is inevitable. What else are the yearnings of poets but yearnings for deliverance from the bounded ? But what a method of deliverance ! Desire for existence, *tanha*, in Buddhist phrase, is to be rooted out, the *manie d'être*—in which Chateaubriand found the secret of his own melancholy—the will-to-live is to be extinguished ; the heresy of personality is to be renounced !

Folly is a burden to itself, and wisdom is tranquillity, announces Seneca to his patients. But the Stoic tranquillity, the tranquillity of the Epicureans, is an anticipation of death in life ; philosophy is the meditation of death, and death is oblivion. The panaceas of Stoics, Epicureans, and Buddhists are one and the same.

The ennui of the eighteenth century.

I will turn to the century immediately preceding this of ours which claims Melancholy for its special malady. Ennui, if not Melancholy—for ennui is the disease of an aristocratic society, cloyed with the delights of pleasure and wit, devoid of faith in ideals, while melancholy is ennui become poetical and passionate—ennui was endemic, chronic in the France of the Eighteenth Century. The ennui of Serenus, in a time of despotism and forced inaction, is the same as that described by Lucretius, in a time of resolution and boundless possibilities of action. The ennui of the Eighteenth Century is much the same under the Regent, when liberty is dreamed of only by a few philosophers, as under Louis the Sixteenth, when liberty is fermenting universally. Civilisation, aristocratic culture, is far advanced ; the pursuit of pleasure is possible and widely practised. But these aristocrats of wealth, birth, brain, report as their last word the vanity of all things. Ecclesiastes had, indeed, deduced—ironically ?—a lesson from this vanity of all things, that it was well to eat, drink, and be merry so long as might be. But these, and Ecclesiastes, know that such merriment is merest vanity. Intellectual pride ends in the confession of boundless, intolerable ennui ; the malady, the scourge of them that are deemed happy and enviable. It is the highly-cultured women of the century that

express the universal ennui the most clearly, the most persistently. Love is woman's whole existence? So long as these women of the Eighteenth Century do not loudly proclaim their amours, they are free to follow the dictates of passion. But Donna Juana is necessarily victim of ennui, of the *impuissance d'aimer*, is unable to love either Creator or creature. In earliest youth she is *dévote;* when age forbids the hope of yet another earthly lover, God is taken as last lover of all. But ennui rides her still, since she is powerless to love.

But take the case of those women whose intellect was clear and profound before and after the death of the passions. Take Madame du Deffand, for example. In youth, she had passed from love to love, that is, from disappointment to disappointment. In age, she is ever seeking new friends, now that lovers may not be. She could no more endure banishment from her Parisian *salon* than Ovid from Rome. Lovers, or friends, they are but sought as solaces from ennui, as aids to avoid solitude and reflection, and are won in vain, for she is infinitely weary of herself and all others. Nothing can interest her. *Esprit*—refinement and delicacy of wit, intellectual vivacity—can no more console her than like gifts could console Madame de Staël. Penetrating analysis of the motives of human conduct, the malicious joys of irony, are veriest misery to her. Foolish in action, for she fain would love and be loved, in youth and age she is the while clear-sighted, ever wise, ever implacably reasonable, ever conscious of the vanity of all things. She would fain be full of kindliness, but her clearness of sight will only permit her to behold in the chosen society around her so many varieties of the fool, so many automata, each set in motion by a ruling

passion. "There is not a single person to whom one can confide one's sorrows without affording a malicious joy." She must lament that she cannot live without love, and yet is wholly incapable of love. Her malady is *la privation du sentiment, avec la douleur de ne s'en pouvoir passer*, destitution of sentiment with the pain of not being able to endure such destitution. This desire to love, coupled with powerlessness to love, strikes the note of the coming "malady of the century." Ennui is passing into Melancholy.

Poor Madame du Deffand! She attains her desire. Hoping against hope, and in spite of reason, a septuagenarian and half-blind, she loves at length, loves with the whole love of a young girl, loves with enthusiasm for another fifteen years,—striving to be credulous that her love is returned. And she bestows her love on—a Horace Walpole, a gay pessimist, he, no victim of ennui, with his absorbing hobbies, with his constant delight in the malign observation of the follies and absurdities of others. And Walpole is keenly conscious of ridicule, much embarrassed by the bestowal, will he nill he, of such an ardent love. Her secretary cannot restrain his grief when she dictates the last letter to her Horace a little while before her death: "Do you love me, then?" she inquires, yearning to be loved, incredulous of love.

What of the wonted remedies of ennui? Pascal long ago pointed out their vanity. Such is human misery that men fly to action and amusement, to dissipation and conversation, not hoping to find happiness therein, but to escape solitude and thought. Such is human life that nothing can content or console if it be examined closely, but men fancy that life will be at

least more tolerable if they can make shift to forget life and its problems for a while, by whatsoever means. Madame du Deffand essays such remedies in vain, even as Chateaubriand who "yawns out his life," even as Byron who knows not how to end his ennui, to end "that awful yawn which sleep cannot abate."

The "malady of the century" again.

I recur to the "malady of the century," and its remedies. An age of Naturalism was duly succeeded, since the pendulum swings from thesis to antithesis, by an age of religion, in this case, an age of religiosity. Chateaubriand, dowered with imaginative sensibility, "believes, because he has wept." Alfred de Musset, a little later, weeps; but belief, with him, does not follow tears. He is too sincere to imitate the haughty pose of Chateaubriand,—for, with Chateaubriand, to believe was to be isolated in lofty dignity, to be the precursor and leader of the revolt against the spirit of the Eighteenth Century,—belief was a form of pride. Alfred de Musset confesses his powerlessness to love, his incapacity of belief; he is capable only of eloquently tracing the consequences of such incapacity. Heine also weeps; but he sterilises his tears by irony, turns his keen wit against his own emotions.

Chateaubriand, proclaiming in proudest, magniloquent tones the belief that was not really his, threw himself on action, essaying to escape the ennui, the melancholy that dogged him. Disdainful of action, he yet enters on the public life, *accedit ad rempublicam*, as the Stoic sages counselled others, as Seneca advised on occasion, and practised, courting thereby undying charges of inconsistency, exposing himself to comparisons drawn between the theoretical sage and the practical states-

man, who must needs be an opportunist. Chateaubriand the man of action, the statesman, glories that he has saved the monarchy which, in his heart of hearts, he judged not worth the saving,—to which he adhered merely from motives of honour, of aristocratic pride—by a war with Spain, forced on by cunningest dissimulation and treachery solely that he may satisfy his pride, that he may reap fame as a glorious saviour of Society. But he conceives his *rôle* as saviour is not sufficiently recognised, he cannot tolerate subordination to a colleague, provokes dismissal, sulks in his tent, leaving it only to soothe his wounded pride by aiding strenuously in the ruin of the monarchy he had saved, and thus compel his former friends to repent that they had cast aside an all-powerful instrument. The ruin consummated, he retires from action, proclaiming at once his fidelity to, and scorn of the fallen monarchy; surrenders himself once more to his haughty melancholy.

Byron was too sincere, too much a child of the Eighteenth Century to be a singer of sentimental faith; he frankly doubts, but his doubts do not extend beyond that popular theology which he never definitely rejects, which is the subject of his curiosity to the end. Child of the Eighteenth Century, he was yet a child of the Revolution, a passionate individualist, melancholy indeed by inheritance, but gifted with intense vitality, felicitously active of mind and body, supremely versatile. Yet to be able to alternate gloom with boisterous buffoonery, and tears with triumphant jests; to be a fallen angel, a tameless Titan, a weary voluptuary, but withal generous, readily amenable to kindness, a hero to his valets, despite the proverb, a cordial, if fickle, friend to all who should pay the deference he claimed

to that rank of his which he deemed his fairest possession ; to love the world, and when rejected by it, to be able to avenge himself by brilliant satire, by scathing denunciations of its hypocrisies, assemble an admiring court in exile, command the rapt attention of his banishers who were eager to outromance his romantic, melodramatic *rôle*—this could not give him joy, could not calm his fevered heart. Poetry, love, adventure, domination could not avail him. Alcibiades-Timon, he vainly flies to Nature for refuge ; but Nature can only re-echo his own despair, Nature cannot enable him to lose his own "wretched identity." In the last resort, he seeks to compass self-oblivion by glorious action ; an aristocrat, disdainful of the "profane mob," eternally "of the opposition," from pilgrim and voluptuary he turns Carbonaro and crusader, and quits the scene in hapless, noble fashion.

Lamartine, in turn, would fain escape from self-consciousness, from melancholy. If Chateaubriand is an artist in religious emotions, if he is rapturously eloquent in praise of the moral beauties of Christianity as others have been in praise of the moral beauties of Paganism, so Lamartine is a seraphic chanter of sweet, sonorous Harmonies and Meditations of Christian tenderness. He would fain convert Byron, and is more Byronic himself than he well knows. Singer of the Infinite, he is appalled, like Pascal, by the "eternal silence" of the universe ; he cannot but reject all creeds and systems, though he knows not how to replace them ; he alternates between despairing questionings and mournful resignation to the ignorance that is imposed on man. He, too, like Chateaubriand and Byron, weary, disdainful of his *rôle* as poet, must fling

himself on political action for relief. A generous democrat, inspired at least by a religion of humanity, he aids in bringing about a fruitless Revolution, is borne on the crest of the wave for a moment, and then cast high and dry on the strand, must end his days of ennui in rolling the Sisyphus-stone of literary hack-work, in renewing efforts to liquidate the debts that his pride, his very ideality, had brought upon him.

The remedy of love, again.

The women of the Eighteenth Century sought in love a remedy of ennui. But Chateaubriand is lucidly conscious of the vanity of all remedies, remedies of love as well as of action. He allows himself to be adored; but, like René, *on le fatiguait en l'aimant.* Magnetic, irresistible, he is yet incapable of returning the love bestowed upon him, of losing himself in love for another. His malady is that of Madame du Deffand: destitution of sentiment with the pain of not being able to endure such destitution. Lamartine allows himself to be loved by "Graziella," by "Elvire"; but he reflects at most the fervour of his lover, reflects it in the form of hysterical declamation. He loves the image that he forms of love, loves to be enthroned, exalted in a woman's heart, loves the mirrored, transfigured self which he beholds in her love. Chateaubriand, Byron, Lamartine vainly essay by love to fill the void of their hearts; they repeat experiment after experiment, but are incurable victims of indefeasible pride and ineradicable egoism. And Goethe, the wise Goethe! His successive loves are merely stages of self-development, occasions of passionate reverie and subsequent calm self-analysis. He too, like these, objectifies in forms of art his momentarily intensified

personality ; and peace succeeds—till what time another love-crisis, and its fresh opportunity for self-development, supervenes.

What has George Sand, versed in the melancholy of the century, to say of the love-remedy ? . . . But why do I raise the question of love at all ? It concerns me not. Yet let me listen to these lovers and their confessions of melancholy, before I proceed to consider the melancholy of thought. . . . Had she been young a little later in the century, George Sand would doubtless have set forth the theory that a state of war is the natural relation between the sexes, that love is but a brief, hollow truce enjoined by nature in her own interests. As it is, she is content to retort men's charge that women cannot love by changing the terms. Love is woman's all in all ; and woman's love—though its objects are unworthy, are incapable of adequate return —is heaven-descended, paramount, inevitable. The conventions of society must be disregarded when love commands, it is the highest duty to obey love's voice. But Indiana must find that to exchange husband for *amant* is to pass from Scylla to Charybdis. And if Valentine's *amant* is possibly to be preferred to her husband, George Sand is logically compelled to invoke fatality, to slay the lover at the moment when fortune permits a lawful love ; for Benedict is a victim of melancholy, and therefore powerless to love with calm constancy. In any case, it is vain for woman to expect a worthy love, for men are wholly egoistic. Lélia, declamatory, dithyrambical Donna Juana, ever baffled in her quest of the ideal, spiritually sensual, sensually spiritual, must needs despair of love. She will essay experiments, but she knows in advance that each experiment will but

confirm her conviction of the vanity of love. Edmée loves, indeed, within the bounds of the permitted, breaks no laws of conscience or society; but, then, since men are weak and selfish, she must submit her lover to a lengthened course of education and trial, in hope that he may prove worthy of her love. Jacques, it is true, is strong and wise; but precisely because he is wise, he knows that love bloweth where it listeth, and lasts just so long as it can; but precisely because he is strong, he seeks death that the Fernande who had loved him, and now cannot but love another, may suffer no impediment in her newest love. . . . Love is woman's all; but love is sorrow. It were wisest not to love, if that may be. Love is destined melancholy, and not its cure. Love is a fatal, disastrous malady, as the Greeks knew, as Goethe and George Eliot demonstrated by example of puppet victims of elective affinities.

The same, continued: Alfred de Musset.

In the confessions of these puissant victims of Melancholy, Chateaubriand, Byron, Lamartine, the part of artistic idealisation, that is to say, exaggeration, is to be discriminated as best may be. They confess, but their confessions are not so much *Dichtung und Wahrheit*, Poetry and Truth, as Poetry and Pride. But Alfred de Musset at least was sincere. Wholly sincere? Never artist merely? Should I call to memory his agonised confessions—if only to confirm myself in my abhorrence of unholy love? But is permitted love other than short-lived illusion, or, at best, short-lived reality? It must be so; I need no confirmation of experience. Well, what is actual, is rational, says Hegel; and bases his philosophy thereon. What-

ever must be, is right, is reasonable. Surely rather, in accordance also with Hegel's system, whatever is, is haplessly imperfect, and fraught with melancholy.

There is no elusive profundity in the sincere melancholy of Alfred de Musset. The poet of youth, to whom youth was love, and love the idolatry of the creature, to whom there was nothing in life worth the living after the age of thirty, nothing in thought worth the thinking, unless it be the thought of past joys—which, when present, were nigh on pain. A petulant, spoilt child throughout, one might almost judge, passionately breaking the toys from which he had anticipated more delight than they could give, sulking because he discovers that pleasure is only pleasure, and not happiness. Mobile, of extreme sensitiveness, he is yet prisoned within a narrow circle of ideas so passionately conceived that they are sensations rather than ideas,—a narrow, truly "vicious" circle of sensations,—chafing against his bonds, but unable to do other than drag his weary round, repeat his dolorous circuit. Idolater, then iconoclast; iconoclast, then idolater; changing, not passion, but only the object of his passion. Eloquent, declamatorily eloquent, since he is youthful, so long as he is youthful; finding in silent tears, when youth was irrevocably gone, the supreme limit of eloquence, the final criticism of life. Exorbitant in pride, in egoism, exalting passion to be a law unto itself, and hence in constant protest against society that restrains, that demands compromise and hypocrisy as the price of its favours. In protest, in the last resort, against Nature, cruel, hypocritical as society, equally outraging the ideal by its mean conditions.

Rien n'est bon que d'aimer, nothing is good in life

save love. But the lover, he must find, the lover's love, and the objects of his love are in perpetual change. Sensation is transitory, pleasure brings pain, passion must run through its gamut of progress, zenith, and decline. The eternal vows at which Jove smiles are exchanged once more, and once again ; but the vowers are no longer the same, each of the twain has abandoned an old for a new love and lover. The lover is like to become a libertine, and the libertine cannot love. But still the libertine, he that cannot love, *amat amare*, loves to love, and endeavours to console himself with the thought that the anticipation and the recollection of love are sweet. Doubt, if you will, if you must, the object of your love, be it a woman or a dog, but doubt not love itself. *Aimer est le grand point, qu'importe la maîtresse.* But this consolation, this vain effort to believe that love is independent of its manifestations, is almost as transitory as sensation itself. Recollection is sweet, but it is recollection of misery. Change is sweet, as bringing momentary oblivion. Change is dolorous, for it renews misery, but misery remembered is happiness. . . . A "vicious" circle, truly !

Well might Alfred de Musset, foiled in earthly love, loving love, yet unable to love, hopelessly seeking stability in change, turn in anguish to thoughts of the God that is changeless, stable Love. If only the thought of the Infinite was not inevitably an infinity of doubt ! Such is thought, that the heart and head are irredeemably divorced. He has suffered, indeed ; and suffering is much. *Rien ne nous rend si grands qu'une grande douleur*, nothing makes us so noble as a noble sorrow ; and God should love such nobleness, should pardon after punishment. *Rien n'est vrai que*

de souffrir, nothing is true but suffering ; doubt is the shadow cast by pride of self, and true suffering excites at least the wish to believe. But does God hear prayers ?—for his doubts are prayers. Why is God indifferent to suffering, and deaf to tearful calls ? God is silent,—and faith is as transitory as pleasure. Doubt succeeds faith, and oblivion is sought in the love that brings fresh pain. But without religion there is no love, but only the spectre of love ; the libertine cannot love, for the vision of the "Spectre of Debauch" has petrified his heart. Pleasure is not love, is not happiness ; but pleasure is an illusion, and illusions are sweet. Don Juan will not renounce his quest of love, though in embracing illusive pleasure, he is embracing disgust. *Il faut aimer sans cesse, après avoir aimé.* The quest of love is the sole possible religion ; love, the illusion of love, is tenderness, and tenderness is deliverance from baneful pride and dolorous egoism. Unhappily, he must confess, with wonted sincerity : "I am not tender, but excessive." . . . And thus he cannot outstep the weary round of his vicious circle. Circle of egoism, for it is solely self that Don Juan loves in his *mille e tre ;* his illusions and disillusions spring from the love of self, from the "heresy of individuality" of which the Buddha speaks. Self must die that the true self may live, says the Hegelian after the Christian.

To be unable to transcend self is to be weary of self. And to be weary of self is to be weary of all men and things. Lorenzaccio, the would-be philanthropist and saviour of society, in losing self-respect, loses all faith in man ; the end of Don Juan must be that of Rolla. To foiled self-love succeeds self-abandonment. Bacchus is at length invoked in place of Venus ; and the rites of

Bacchus are prolonged rites of self-suicide, whether Bacchus be invoked to stimulate or to dull emotion. Hapless Alfred de Musset! Even if age, with its forced calm, had been granted him, he could neither have turned *dévot*, like his ancestors of the two preceding centuries, nor yet have rejoiced, with Sophocles, that he was freed at length from the tyranny of love. The Nessus-robe of passion had clung all too tightly and corroded all too deeply. Moreover, he is incurably dual. He is melancholy of heart and gay of wit, an idealist and yet a materialist. He is Cœlio, but also Octave; Albert, but also Rodolphe; Don Juan, but also Hassan. The angel and the beast, the dove and the serpent, hold continual controversy within him; there is no truce, still less a decisive victory.

The remedies of action and love, continued.

These, and Alfred de Musset, found no remedy for Melancholy in love of women. How was it possible? It is not the love that men inspire, but the love they feel, which satisfies the heart; and these were wholly incapable of transcending, forgetting self. Nor, with the exception of Goethe, who restricted himself to merely administrative functions, did they find relief in action. Action was only distraction, entailing penalties. How could it be otherwise? To what compromises and compliances, to what self-imposed atrophy of thought and conscience must the contemplative subject themselves when they abandon thought for action! The idea can only be realised by gross means, and the resulting imperfect realisation must obey the laws of development—which necessarily include decline. That which is accomplished with the best intent is doomed to become a bar to future accomplishments, to provoke

revolt. Reform needs constant reformation ; progress is only change ; and change, if it implies gain, also implies corresponding loss.

But how stands the case of my own melancholy ? I must not for a moment allow myself to suppose that, because I have been haunting for a while the company of the puissant victims of Melancholy, I am their equal —in unhappiness. Mine cannot be the degree of theirs. Nor should I judge of the adequacy of remedies by their failure in the case of genius, ultra-sensitive to joy and pain, genius, moreover, which is wont to arrogate to itself the right of licence as the necessary means of self-development.

To begin with, I am in no revolt against society. I expect nothing on her part, and therefore cannot chafe against her negligence. I am not conscious of merit, and therefore am not called to blame society indignantly for refusing to duly recognise it. It follows also, by way of corollary, that such consolation as results from the consciousness of power, however impeded, cannot be mine. . . . Unhappy, insensate Werther, who, protected and encouraged, must needs lament, during his brief trial of action within society, that he was esteemed for his merits, his talents, and not for himself —much as Mme. Récamier must needs lament that she was admired for her beauty and not for her wit.

Were action truest panacea, were action permitted me, action other than the mechanical action of one who must congratulate himself if he be allowed to discharge any humblest function in society, conscious, the while, that, by occupying his almost unhoped-for post, he is debarring another——. . . . But what of those to whom the widest action is permitted ? Byron, aiding to free

a nation, must find himself plunged in all the meanness of reality, must witness the jealous illiberality of the would-be liberators. How many have reaped deception and disgust from the achievement of their ambition, interested or disinterested! And Shelley, aiding, so he deemed, the development of intellectual freedom, finds no better way of action than to cast pamphlets from Dublin balconies and distribute them in Dublin streets, or to enclose "Declarations" and "Devil's Walks" in sea-tossed bottles! Given the power to conceive and express ideas, the field of action is ample, is incalculably wide. But Shelley could not wait for slow infiltrations; and Chateaubriand, Byron, Lamartine eagerly abandoned intellectual for political action. . . . But was not the intellectual action of these men, is not intellectual action in general, even more dangerous than political action? Hapless Luther and Encyclopædists, when peasants and proletariat take them at their word! But also hapless, helpless Goethe, smiling ironically at the victims of the maladies of Wertherism and Romanticism which he had inoculated or fostered; hapless, helpless Chateaubriand, disdainful of those that took his René for an example and not a warning, for a type to be imitated, and not a pathological abnormity! . . . It is true that the literary genius may confine his action, may content himself to play with fancy and imagination, and furnish anodynes. Goethe can delight himself and others by tracing the happy, lawful love and healthy, ordered action of a Hermann and Dorothea. Lamartine can write a Jocelyn; George Sand, grown calm with age, a host of prettiest stories, guileless, ingenuous. But it is not the Hermanns, the Jocelyns, the Petite Fadettes that influence action, that command

imitative practice. And, moreover, not only is it the making of a poison, rather than of an anodyne, that confers fame, but passion, mental disease, offers endless scope for analysis and delineation, while tranquillity, sanity, admits of only a few brief phrases of suggestion. It is the rebels against laws divine and human that fascinate; they that are moderate, they that err venially, serve but as foils. It is in vain that a Balzac draws up a balance-sheet of virtuous and vicious characters in his "Human Comedy"; the vicious alone strike the attention and impress the memory. Thackeray's women, if good, are stupid; if culpable, are clever, interesting. A Major Dobbin is speedily portrayed and relegated to the background; a Colonel Newcome can only occupy the stage as tragic victim of misfortune. . . . But why proceed? In any case, the remedy of literary action, whether it take the form of poison or anodyne manufacture, cannot be mine to essay.

And the remedy of love, vain as that of action? I am not like to see the "Spectre of Debauch"; passion has not, shall not, enter into my life. Passion can find no happiness in the moral order, nor yet in the violation of it. It demands more than life and love can give. It is brief in proportion to its intensity. As pain, or at best indifference, follows pleasure, so disillusion, or indifference, succeeds to illusion. And since, passion once tasted, the heart refuses to be nourished by other food, illusion is craved in spite of disenchanting experience, and phantom is grasped after phantom, till age brings final, hopeless weariness. It is enough to remember Alfred de Musset's melancholy. . . . But the love that is worthy of the name? Love is child of Idleness; Euphues's "cooling-card" addressed to lovers

has no other text. But my youth was spent in ardent, absorbing quest of knowledge—that knowledge which, I find, is sorrow only. And Love is a matter of fortuitous "juxtaposition," as Clough would say. But I have been isolated ever, in the years of study, as in the years of slavery. Moreover, "Prosperity's the very bond of love." So I have constantly re-echoed, have rejoiced—with a strange joy—that I shall have no comrade in privation, none to share with me the "uses of adversity" which, forsooth, are "sweet." But, men say, there is a love that is irresistible, child of Fate and not of Idleness. Here also am I spared. I have been no victim of an "elective affinity." There is nothing of Goethe's "dæmonic" in me; I exercise no "personal magnetism." Nor have I been under any spell cast willingly, indifferently, unwillingly or unconsciously by another. Love plagues me not.

His own melancholy; the melancholy of thought.

I could not if I would, I would not if I could, essay these remedies of love or action—remedies which aggravate, palliatives that exasperate, the malady. But still the question confronts me: how shall I define the fashion of my melancholy, and how assign its causes? Is it the melancholy of Stagirius, whom St. Chrysostom endeavoured to heal by dint of homilies,—Stagirius, scorning and envying at once the crude simplicity of the vulgar; admiring and deploring his lack of their brutal, thoughtless strength of will; self-tormenting, eating his own heart; drifting hither and thither, a sport of vague passion and desire; unable to bear either remedy or disease; cherishing his disease, and yet craving a remedy. Victim of fatal contemplation, he looks upon the world, and sees the sinner blessed and the

innocent stricken. But such antitheses are all too simple to express the complexity of that which he must behold. He looks upon the world, and sees that the austere suffer melancholy even as the profligate. More than this, he sees that it is not the austere, the upright, but the sowers of wild oats, the culpable destroyers of their own peace and that of others, who are curable. . . . Or is it the melancholy of Obermann, conscious that he can have no part in the world of men, resigned to his imperfection and powerlessness, resigned to solitude, past desire, past desiring to desire, wholly disillusioned? But why run through the list of my brethren in Melancholy?

The causes, then? Bodily defect, ill-health, weakness of frame, count for something, for something only, in the explanation of the melancholy of a Byron, a Leopardi, an Obermann, a Novalis. And, as Obermann says, "he who should see in poverty nothing more than the direct consequences of the lack of money would have no barest idea of its real misery." I am neither weak nor strong; I suffer not the extremity of poverty. Is my melancholy, then, due to a disproportion of the sensitive and intellectual faculties, to the exclusive employment of thought on the analysis of personal emotion, to proud egoism, the incapacity to transcend self? "The man whose eye is ever on himself"—soon comes to scorn himself. But if introspection only deepens melancholy, if self-analysis is the direst of maladies, yet introspection is only a phase of wider, universal contemplation. To me, to the victims of general contemplation, even more than to the victims of egoism, is manifest the hopeless disproportion between the ideal and the real, the endlessly unreconciled, irre-

concilable antinomies of the necessity of the ideal and its impossibility. Nor does it serve to hold that to the excess of egoism corresponds the excess of self-oblivion, that either extreme is prone to melancholy; for the desiderated mean is, as all means are, ideal, impossible.

In these last pages I have been often on the point of deducing, of affirming, that the melancholy Egoist cannot forget himself in the love of the creature because he cannot forget himself in the love of God. But melancholy is quite as much due to the predominance of the intellectual faculties over the emotional, as to the predominance of the emotional over the intellectual. The victims of melancholy have sought God that they may love him, and lose self in love, but cannot find him. The world is his creation, but the frame of things is as repugnant to reason as to sentiment. Not the heart only, but the intellect protests. Who, what is God, the Principle that has brought this world of misery into being? Mere blind Necessity, with or without a plan, an aim? The *Anima Mundi;* the Immanent Energy, the unknown Reality of which this world of things is the efflorescence, of which matter and mind are only symbols; the eternal Substance of passing phenomena? The Infinite, the Absolute, the Ineffable? The supra-sensual cravings of the human heart, or intellectual beauty, bodied forth, personified, decorated with inconsistent attributes, by the necessarily anthropomorphistic forms of the human intellect? The "tribal self"; "our father Humanity" who—or which—is ever creating God in his own image? The Moral Order? . . .

The victims of the Ideal are also the victims of Truth. As the Ideal, so Truth is unattainable; their

melancholy is due to their life-long despair of attainment. Their faculties are in disequilibrium, and chiefly because of their poignant sense that harmony, that equilibrium, is impossible. Melancholy is no mere all-absorbing selfishness; it is born of disinterested questionings; questionings that impose themselves, that cannot be staved off. If the melancholy of Don Juan results from his baffled quest of Infinite Love, that of Faust results from the baffled quest of Infinite Truth. Moreover, it is all in vain that men, in the name of practical wisdom, counsel acceptance of, subordination to the real, rejection of, indifference to, all that transcends experience; for Physics and Ethics end inevitably in Metaphysics, the known and knowable in the unknown, the unknowable—that is chiefly, solely worthy of knowledge,—just as physical, experimental morality is meaningless without the standard and sanction of intuitional, supra-sensual, unexperimental morality. We are inexplicable by any explanation that experience can afford. As Benjamin Constant said: "We feel ourselves destined for something of which we can form no idea; we are as watches which should have no dial-plate, and whose wheels, endowed with intelligence, should turn till they were worn away, knowing not the wherefore and ever repeating; since I turn, there must be an aim in my turning." We live, but wherefore do we live?

The melancholy of thought, continued: Alfred de Vigny.

Clough, Leopardi, Alfred de Vigny; these were victims of the *Weltschmerz*, of the Melancholy of Thought, rather than of baneful Self-Love. These cannot "rest contented with the Quia," as Dante's Virgil, as Epicureans and Positivists, bid us mortals;

these cannot acquiesce in knowing that the world is what it is ; they ask the wherefore,—and ask in vain, yet cannot cease to ask. They are for ever haunted by

> Those obstinate questionings
> Of sense and outward things, . . .
> Blank misgivings of a creature
> Moving about in worlds not realised.

—Questionings that are insoluble, but also inevitable.

The flower of a noble line not soiled by celebrity, truly noble himself by nature, uncompromising devotee of honour "the poetry of duty," fair of face and stately of form, the most philosophical of the poets of his race and time, in possession of a glory unprofaned by popularity, just poor enough to be stimulated to win such glory as might suffice to maintain his dignity unimpaired, tenderly filial, bridled with Theages's bridle of ill-health, delicate of mind and body, consistent idealist,—and yet wholly melancholy, this Alfred de Vigny, with a melancholy almost as despairing and complete as that of Leopardi.

Refined and sensitive, his pride was wounded by the neglect of public and politicians. Yet he knew that refinement necessitates isolation, and isolation breeds dislike. A Stoic born, he knew it was merest folly to desire the suffrage of the many, suffrage which he scorned ; knew moreover that no man has the right to despise another, though he be indifferent to his praise or blame. Cynosure of a day, drawn into the world by the success of a well-timed drama, he had violated the ideal, indeed, by an earthly, guilty love ; but he had suffered proportionately to his offence in betraying the ideal, he had repented and returned to his cult.

If he must sing the wrath of Samson against treacherous, unstable Delilah, against woman, *enfant malade et douze fois impur*, he could still sing of the tender Eva, ideal woman, ideal of poetry. If, like Vauvenargues, he must at first lament forced inaction, he could still learn to disdain action, and proclaim the superiority of contemplation. He could judge it sufficient action to be prophet of ideas, and such action to be fairer than that of the politician, hampered by the passions and interests of men—and his own,—ever compromising the ideal.

But to be an idealist, and yet unable to believe in ideals ; to be a disillusioned idealist ! What fate more unhappy, more inevitably persuasive of melancholy ? His mind, relentlessly logical, penetrates to the end of each perspective, there to discover—nothingness. Glory, Happiness, Love, are mere abstractions, void, inane. To think, to write of these, is first to feign that they exist, to create phantoms and then adore them or blaspheme, exalt or debase. "We are sceptical Don Quixotes, less excusable than Cervantes's hero, for we know that our giants are but fulling-mills, and that our illusions are self-induced." Nature ? We work on ourselves to believe she is a refuge and a consolation, the while she is wholly inexorable, not supremely unjust only because she is supremely indifferent. Man ? Clearly in a state of punishment, prisoned in the world he knows not why. What, then, of God, the Jailer ? God listens not to the tearful questions and despairing appeals of his prisoners. The very Christ, in the agony of the Garden, implores in vain for answer. "As price of my martyrdom, let doubt and evil cease to triumph. At the least, let Lazarus reveal what he

has seen." But God vouchsafes no answer; Heaven is as silent as Earth. If there shall be a Judgment, it is the Judge that shall be arraigned.

What then remains? The Good is ever mingled with evil, good breeds evil, while evil breeds only evil. What then should be the attitude of him that is wise? Despair brings a despairing consolation. "Wisdom is peaceful despair, without convulsions of anger or reproach. This once recognised, I accept with thankfulness the days that bring me pleasure, even the days that bring at least no misfortune or sorrow." In brief, he welcomes the negative happiness of Stoico-Epicurean apathy. "It is good and salutary to be devoid of hope." He that has ceased to hope is thereby in the way of appreciating the surprises of accidental happiness. "In this prison of life, whence death removes us one by one, we must not count on freedom or flowers. This known, the tiniest nosegay, the meanest flower rejoices heart and sight, and we thank the Power which has permitted us to find and gather it. It is true that we know not why we are prisoners, know not the charge against us; but we know assuredly our penalty of prison-suffering and final death. Let us not think of judge, of suit unknowable, but thank the unknown jailer who allows us often joys that are worthy of Heaven. . . . We are not sure to know all when we leave our prison, but we are sure we shall know nothing within it. . . . It is sure that our jailer, had he so willed, could have let us know our suit and doom. Since he has not willed and will not will, let us be content to thank him for the lodging more or less comfortable that he has given us; and since we cannot withdraw from the

common misery, let us not increase it by endless complaint. . . . There are those (would you believe it?) to whom their prison becomes so dear, that they fear deliverance."

Thus, with resignation, men can attain to peace. But it is the resignation to ignorance that is the hardest to Alfred de Vigny. "Why are we resigned to all save ignorance of the mysteries of eternity? Because of hope, which is the source of all our cowardice. We fashion a faith, impose it on ourselves, essay to impose it on others, constrain them at need by force. Why not rather avow: I am weighed down beneath a condemnation to which I submit always, O Lord! submissively languishing in prison, knowing not my crime. I plait straws that I may forget my woe from time to time: this is the sum of human toil. . . . I hope for nothing that this world can give, and thank thee for that thou hast given me power to toil, that so I may forget my ignorance." . . .

The Deists of the Eighteenth Century, like the Epicureans, divorced God from Man. God is afar, wholly indifferent, revealed at most in the ordered mechanism of his works. And Alfred de Vigny, like Alfred de Musset, is heir, as he must be, of the Eighteenth Century and its attenuated beliefs. But he also breathes the intellectual air—or, if you will, struggles to breathe in the void—of his own century. Belief, from attenuated, has become nebulous. God is no longer the Mechanician, indifferent to his work, but a mere unknown quantity, only winning a semblance of personality when protested against. Man fashions mythologies, Vigny might say, and is dismayed at his own creations. Vigny is a poet, and therefore a

mythologist. But he is consciously mythical, therefore ironical. He reverses his spell, and the vision fades, leaving him in wonted darkness, groping in the void.

But, though religion have no object, life without religion is impossible. Man is a slave, says Vigny, slave of Fate—Fate still, whether you call it Providence, with the Stoics, or Grace, with Christians. Man is creature of Necessity; yet man, yet Vigny, must needs be religious, must needs embrace the illusions of free-will, finding dignity in struggle and effort. Honour, dignity, self-respect, is Vigny's religion, the sole possible religion of the manly, he deems. While Musset, the poet of passion, hopes in spite of hopelessness, protests with sobs that *un grand espoir a traversé la terre*, Vigny, the poet of ideas, counsels abnegation of all hope, judging it wisdom, so it would seem, not even to harbour the "fair hope" with which a Socrates could meet his death. To acquiesce is the loftiest self-respect. And self-respect enjoins silence, silence which is the fitting criticism of life, silence at most to be broken by words of pity, by a song of Eloa, woman-angel sprung from a tear of pity shed by the Christ. . . .

Acquiescence, and silence! How often have I shared in Alfred de Vigny's creed. And is not pity love? Eloa, tender woman-angel, pities Satan as most pitiable, and her pity passes into love. Ill-doing results from ignorance; ill-doers — "they know not what they do"—are pitiable. But if I pity, do I love? . . . And this religion of honour? Vigny, all the Stoics, lean but on themselves,—on broken reeds. Stoicism is a religion of the void.

The same, continued: the Promethean attitude.

The Thinker is a Prometheus, an Adam. He has tasted of the fruit of knowledge, he has ravished the light of the gods. . . . And this light of reason is but as a feeble camp-fire in a boundless prairie palled in night, a narrow circle of flickering gleams which fade fast into the limitless vast of impenetrable darkness, serving at most to make this darkness all the darker. They of the bivouac who are timid, people the surrounding darkness with shapes of terror, and crowd the closer for company's sake, feverishly simulating mirth that so they may not heed the darkness. The courageous sit apart, smiling at their comrades' fears. By way of reassuring them, they maintain that darkness is but the negation of light. They allow that they are unable to demonstrate that the darkness is unpeopled, but counsel their comrades to cease creating phantoms, to attend solely to that which can be seen and heard and known within the circuit of the light. . . . And some counsel acquiescence in ignorance, and silence—the while they seek to penetrate the darkness, the while they protest against the prison-limits of the camp-fire. Alfred de Vigny is hopeless, therefore acquiescent. But he is not calm in acquiescence, and he breaks his silence in the posthumous protests of his *Journal* and his *Les Destins*. He would allow that blasphemy—or rather, since the word is strong—reproach is cowardice, and yet utters reproaches, even if posthumous reproaches.

Would Prometheus defy Zeus, if he did not fear him? Would he not be silent, if completely confident? A Shelley, a Mme. Ackermann proclaim the coming dethronement of the established Gods; herald the dawn of equality and love, the advent of Humanity autonomous

and conscious that love is human only. Why then renew the defiances of Prometheus, since the tyrant is to fall? Mme. Ackermann, like Alfred de Vigny, holds that contemptuous silence is the severest condemnation of the judge. But the twain break silence, and cry, with Omar Khayyam, "man's forgiveness give—and take!" They bid the tyrant remember he is but a vassal of Destiny, Necessity. They proudly avow they will be no vassals of a vassal. . . . But this God of the Dawn, this prior, fatal Necessity that the Greeks throned above Zeus, this Nature, this Reign of Law of Lucretius and modern scientists? Zeus shall be dethroned, and the elder, rightful God shall reign, says Mme. Ackermann. And saluting his advent, she must needs sigh and sorrow; for "mournful and blind" is this God of the Dawn. When Zeus shall be dethroned wrath will be needless, indeed; but melancholy will be deepened. Nature, Necessity, is only endless imperfection, is only Death and Change. Nature can inspire no pæan that is not an elegy, if sincere. The new God must be arraigned by contemptuous silence, even as the old. And Mme. Ackermann fails not to ejaculate cries of "agony and infinite horror," to break silence, and curse the God whose advent she desired.

Goethe, to celebrate the moment of his revulsion from the mystic pietism of Lavater to that ἓν καὶ πᾶν doctrine of Spinoza which he interpreted according to his own needs, objectified his deliverance under the type of Prometheus. "Let the gods keep that which is theirs; they cannot rob me of my own. They have their share, I mine." "What then," asks Epimethius, "is thy share?" "The whole range of my activity." But Goethe, according to his wont, was simply giving plastic

form to his emotion of the moment. With him, the idea of the moment was absolute, exclusive of all others, as he confessed, till the advent of another idea, equally paramount, exclusive. And moreover, disdaining all painful effort to synthesise, to reconcile antinomies, he stayed not to ask himself how there can be a "mine" of man, and a "thine" of the Gods, how there can be an *imperium in imperio*, how man shall wrest autonomy from tyrannical Zeus, blind Destiny, heartless Nature, indifferent Law. Goethe is an artist; it is enough for the moment that Prometheus shall be eloquent in defiance, shall superbly indict the heartless indifference of Zeus to the cries of men, shall proclaim that Destiny Eternal is Lord over Zeus, and that man for help must look only to himself. Prometheus-Goethe, disillusioned of childish faith and hope, proudly centres on himself, proudly entrenches himself within the orbit of his activity. "Didst thou think I should mourn and languish, and fly to the desert because my childish faith was gone, because my dream-flowers ripened not?" But Alfred de Vigny fled to the desert, and sorrowed in the solitude of his "ivory tower." And we that are weak and disinherited by Destiny, sorrow in lonely silence, not tempted to break silence, not poets. . . .

Well, Jehovah vouchsafes to Job no other answer than the revelation of his majesty. It is not for Job to know of the Prologue, of the compact with the Evil One, of the mystery of permitted evil. At the least, it is Job, despairing sincere questioner as to the secrets of his prison-house, as to his crime, who is "accepted"; while his friends, the sagacious mouthers of commonplaces, are sent empty away.

Man were God, if he could think the thoughts of God. Vanini knew this well enough: "You ask of me what God is? If I knew, I should be God." Bruno, *gott-betrunken* even more, perchance, than Spinoza, knows and confesses that unity is incomprehensible, that the mystic ecstasies of Idealistic Pantheism are not science. Hegel, indeed, claimed to rethink the thoughts of God; he was versed in all the secrets of the Absolute, could recount to you the history, and even the embryology, of the Absolute, and therefore was——. However, Hegel did not presume on his divinity, delegated it rather to humanity as a whole, past, present, and to come—humanity the *Gott-Mensch*. Pity only that Heine, mistaking the sense of his master, deified himself, and then speedily found all too good reason to abdicate. Yet needs must humanity be divine, and the individual autonomous. For has not dogma and supernatural authority been "found out"? is it not now fully realised, or rather, do not men believe that they believe that humanity can have no other object of reverence than itself idealised, that creeds are merely morality objectified, expressed in transitory forms? Humanity is divine, and the enlightened individual, knowing the conditions of human thought and sentiment, no longer dupe of illusions, is autonomous. The ancients knew this; Stoics, Epicureans, and Neo-Academicians. *Virtutem nemo unquam acceptam deo tulit*, no one ever attributed his own virtue to the gift of Heaven. *A se ipso sumendam sapientiam*, each must derive his wisdom from himself. Horace fashions, or rather is ever about to fashion his own tranquillity. . . . It is true that history and personal observation hardly allow us to

The remedy of autonomy.

recognise the beauty of man's divinity as revealed in action, and that a Seneca must add: *Nulla sine deo mens bona est*, human thoughts are prone to evil but for the grace of God. Well, then, man is angel and beast, divine so long as he is angelical, so long as he subdues the beast within him, so long as his reason reigns, as he is autonomous.

And yet the melancholy of these autonomous moralists! Carlyle, no more than Alfred de Vigny, is to be duped; they will be laws unto themselves. And yet their melancholy only varies in degree, if the melancholy of the disillusioned Idealist be more profound, more paralysing than that of the Misanthrope. Alfred de Vigny withdrew to the solitude of his "ivory tower," to suffer in silence. Well might he do so, for men are not tolerant of Stoical disdain, much less of pity. Carlyle would not withdraw; he was too indignant for silence. Besides, men do not object to being denounced as "mostly fools"; they recognise the truth of the charge—as far as their neighbours are concerned. Alfred de Vigny was hopeless of certainty, and broke silence only in posthumous laments. Carlyle continually thundered his commands for general silence. There is no other certainty or blessedness than work; and that men may work they must silence their doubts once and for ever. But the disillusioned idealist smiles at such certainty, such blessedness; "one would be bestowing a benefit on mankind in teaching them the method of playing with ideas instead of playing with actions, which are ever a source of misery." Pascal is dismayed at the utter silence of Infinity, and can only smile with deepest sorrow at the toil of men, the toil for toil's sake or the toil of pleasure. Carlyle, armed with his certainty, can

only write homilies of indignant despair that men so doubt his certainty. The vast majority of men, he finds, are incapable of autonomy. A Goethe, a Carlyle, can be trusted to their own guidance; but for the vast majority, the "categorical imperative" must be incarnated in heroic slave-drivers. Men must be whipped into submission, and forced to do the work that lies nearest to their hand, even as, in the Golden Age to come, of which Renan and Mr. Herbert Spencer dream, they must delight to be the slaves of an aristocratic body, a mandarinate of savants.

Was indeed Carlyle, this devotee of duty, with his wrathful scorn of fools, whether pig-philosophers or pantheists or votaries of the "ecclesiastical chimæras which roam the earth in a very lamentable manner," less melancholy than Vigny, the devotee of honour, the "poetry of duty," with his mingled disdain and pity? Love frustrated of its object turns to bitterness, and bitterness is proportionate in intensity to the foiled love it succeeds; perchance his love, and therefore his melancholy, were deeper than those of Alfred de Vigny. But perchance, again, he loved his melancholy, and luxuriated in his grief far otherwise than Vigny. He can be indignant, intolerant; and indignation, intolerance, increase vitality. The world was to him the eternal battle-field of Ormuzd and Ahriman, the Good and the Evil Principles. He can fling away the scabbard, and truculently side with his heroes, his successive Avatars of Ormuzd—whose right should be might, but whose victories are ever checked, counterbalanced by victories of Ahriman. Supremely intolerant, he would not have stayed to listen to another autonomous moralist, to Marcus Aurelius admonishing with calm:

"though the gods are immortal, and have their patience tried through so many ages, yet they are not angry, because for so long a time they will have to put up with base and wretched mortals. . . . And are you, that are just going off the stage, sick of the company? are you tired with evil men already, and yet one of these unhappy mortals yourself?" He had surely gorgonised the citer of such a sentiment, taken the "Meditations" from his hand, and cited in retort: "men are born to be serviceable to one another, therefore either reform the world, or bear with it," adding, with a lowering brow, that if you are to aid in reforming it, you must be indignant, must cease to "bear with it." And thereupon, he would have exalted his masterful slave-drivers, refusing to heed that "all manners of kingship may fall into the worst hands"; would have fulminated his gospel of labour, staying not to consider that "a man has work enough to make himself tolerable to himself"; would have held mystical discourse of Infinities, forgetful that mysticism is not autonomous morality.

The subjective melancholy of Realists and Idealists.

Haply these two, Carlyle and Vigny, were melancholy because they were idealists, Utopians, pessimistical optimists; melancholy because they refused to accept, or could not see the world as it is. "'Tis idleness to fume against the world, which none the less wags on its wonted course," says Euripides in a Bellerophon fragment. Now, Machiavelli is a positivist, an autonomous moralist who calmly studies human nature in the scientific manner and does not quarrel with facts. Men are neither wholly good nor bad; blinded by illusions, they know not clearly their desires. He is intelligent, is "virtuous" who rightly

conceives the logic of things, who sets before him a definite aim and correctly judges the means he must employ to attain this aim. Therefore, according to Machiavelli, he is vicious, is melancholy, who knows not what he desires, who is too weak to select a precise end and the appropriate means to this end, who hesitates and doubts and frets at the disproportion between the ideal and the real. . . . But this same practical Machiavelli is regarded as a mere visionary by Guicciardini, more practical still. Machiavelli, one might say, dreams out Utopias of liberty and equality, Utopian republics—whose citizens, by the way, are as wholly annulled by and absorbed in the State as Plato's republicans ;—and then, like Plato again, recognising that his Utopia is not to be realised, having regard to the frame of human nature, descends, condescends to a possible State, invokes a Carlylese dictator to his aid, dowered with the virtues of lion and wolf at once, even as Frederick. But Guicciardini recognises that Utopias and desires are—desires and Utopias ; recognises that *conoscere non è mettere in atto*, that to know end and means, and to act accordingly, are two things, not one, not necessarily, seldom indeed, connected. Wisdom is not science, but rather, prudence. Like La Rochefoucauld, like Spinoza, he bases on self-interest. The wise man is he who has dismissed once for all the futile investigation of Truth—for men are "in the dark of things"—who, freed from chimæras, attends solely to his own interest, studying discretion in the book of experience, accepting the world as it is. The enlightened egoist is not to be deterred from his interest by any scruples of conscience, he listens not to the voice of his heart, nor vainly seeks a stay in the supernatural. He who

fails has only himself to blame. . . . And both Machiavelli and Guicciardini failed, in spite of science and prudence. Both thought to use "the great" as tools to their own ends, and were discarded when deemed no longer useful.

. . . And the melancholy which exhales from the pages in the composition of which they sought to beguile their enforced solitude is acrid, asphyxiating, is the melancholy of men of action. More tolerable by far, suave and sweet in comparison, is the melancholy of Petrarca and Tasso, weaklings though they were, dismayed by the disproportion of the ideal and the real, not positive and prudent, led by illusions, subjective only. But perchance Petrarca, pagan ascetic, melancholy with the superficial melancholy of the imagination, able to be worldly, adroit to win and enjoy the world's "good things"; and Tasso, melancholy with the deepest melancholy of the heart, eternally oscillating between dreams of sanctity and dreams of neo-paganism, unable to attain unity and calm—perchance these were victims of melancholy, as victims of—Mediævalism and Semitism. They could not break their bonds and freely trust to their fundamental nature, Carducci would doubtless say. They were Italians, he would continue, therefore pagans, but Italians made morbid by superinduced Semitic asceticism and septentrional subjectivity. . . . As though the Hellenes were not melancholy; and as though we moderns could return to such mitigated melancholy! We can now joy in outer nature without fear or scruple—when such joy is permitted us who are prisoners in the nightmare labyrinths of industrialism,—but can we find joy in our hearts, stay our questionings, live aimlessly and in the moment?

Is melancholy the ransom of self-consciousness, of subjectivity? But the positive man of the world, the Machiavelli, the Guicciardini, may be as melancholy as the subjective idealist, the Tasso, the Petrarca. And the disillusioned idealist, the Alfred de Vigny, is in the same case as they who deem themselves incapable of being the dupes of illusion. In sooth, each and all are the sport of subjective illusion. Despite Hegel, we cannot transcend subjectivity, egoism; we must needs mould the objective world after the fashion of our personality. Self-interest, self-preservation, as La Rochefoucauld and Spinoza knew, is the basis of our being, of all our thoughts and actions, whether we be idealists or positivists. The hero flings away his life only to assert himself; self-sacrifice is the loftiest expression of pride and selfishness. The lover loves himself in another, loves his own image exalted in his mistress's heart. The saint loves himself in God, loves his own qualities exalted to the highest perfection.

Yet "love was given that self might be annulled," warns the Protesilaus of Wordsworth. But is self-oblivion desirable, or even possible? Hegel brands as subjective, that is to say, egoistic, the man who, weary of balancing the antinomies of objective Truth—(if there be objective Truth),—selects theological dogmas after subjective criterions, and adheres to them; or the man who, dismissing the external-internal authority of dogmas, trusts to intuition; or the Berkeley-Fichtean idealist. The ideal is the real; the ideal is, or is to be, realised. What is, is reasonable and right. But how is it possible to dull the sense of the sin—or, if you will, the imperfection—and the suffering of this "reasonable" world which is lost in evil; how transcend personality and

its arbitrary judgments of good and evil? . . . Unless, indeed, you dissolve personality, with Hume. But even then you must build it up again with some "sceptical solution of sceptical doubts."

The German Romanticists were idealists, chimærical idealists, deeming themselves humiliated by reality. The present was intolerable, but the past, because it was remote, seemed beautiful. Thither would they fly for refuge. Therefore they preached a return to Mediævalism; but such returns are impossible; there are no Restorations. Or, artists, they created an imaginary mediæval world; imaginary, because, as artists, they refused to see the mediæval world as it really was, even as the neo-pagans refuse to see the horrors of historical paganism. They escaped not melancholy; how could it be otherwise? And they sought oblivion from subjectivity; fled to the fold of the elder Church, fled to Nature. But their Nature was voluptuous subjectivity, as, for example, the Nature of Novalis was subjective mysticism, which is the border-land of voluptuousness and insanity. Heine, greatest and last, was subjective idealist, neo-pagan, Semite; Protean, but ever tearful, jesting at his tears with jests that were more bitter than tears. Romanticism was *Krankheit*, Disease, as Goethe said, was Melancholy. But, again, is it possible, or even desirable, to transcend Subjectivity, Selfishness, Melancholy?

The remedy of pride.

Die to thyself that thou mayest live: this, Hegelian formula of Christian humility and self-sacrifice, sings itself in my heart as constant refrain. As Plutarch says, they alone live as they desire to live who have learnt to desire what they should desire. Pride is lofty

ennui, no more; pride is decorative, flamboyant wretchedness. Pride, the god of the egoist. . . . Chateaubriand has beheld the nothingness of all things, and is plunged in gloom. He knows in advance that love and ambition are all insufficient to satiate his pride, that it is in vain he seeks to lose himself in action, in the love of the women who, vainly hoping to console the inconsolable, gave him their hearts. Moreover, pride would not suffer him to be the dupe of illusions. Pride sat amid the ruins, scornful, refusing consolation. "*Que vous reste-il?*" "*Moi! Moi! dis-je, et c'est assez.*" "*Medea superest,*" he would have loftily rejoined, with Corneille's and Seneca's heroine—with Milton's Satan. But such pride is inevitably accompanied by irony; he that scorns all men and things, also scorns himself. Nor could he lose himself in God. He is indifferent to all things, save religion, he assures us, confirming his pride; but who can recognise humility and self-surrender in his portrait of the Trappist Rancé, converted *mondain* who left the world because it could not offer anything that was worth the desiring, portrait in which he had depicted René once again, not Rancé, as subjective painters assimilate their models to the one type they cannot but portray, as Byron's heroes are ever Byron.

But must pride die? Chateaubriand's pride is at least sincere, he affects no hypocritical humility. Pride often lurks beneath humility; there is nothing more akin to pride than humility, nothing more scandalous than the man who is proud of his humility, as Spinoza and Marcus Aurelius know. Pride is dignity, is strength; Dante, proudest among the proud, will not condemn his Lucifer for the sin of pride, but for his

treason against Love. Musset's Franck is eloquent in the cause of his half-truth—and what truth is not a half-truth—that pride is the source of all human virtues, of patience, constancy, probity, excellence. If pride and humility are both excesses, Spinoza will prefer the excess of pride; pride is self-affirmation, therefore necessary, right. Though by that sin fell the angels, by pride, self-respect, stands Rousseau's Monsieur de Volmar. Julie, indeed, who is to reveal to the world, in Rousseau's intention, that reason and self-respect are mightier than passion, is only saved by death from renewed falling, and takes her leave of the sun with the cry that pride is all-insufficient, that she needs some other stay. But, then, Julie is a woman. Yet Shakespeare's Constance, sorrow-stricken, that she may live must needs "instruct her sorrows to be proud."

How, indeed, distinguish pride from humility? No sentiment reigns absolutely in the heart; each is ever mingled inextricably with its opposite. Luther's adversary would find in him ample excuse for charge of pride; Luther, in turn, who had sought peace in vain by the ascetic way, would recognise in him whose life was modelled on the *De Imitatione* the pride that thinks to earn salvation by merit. Nor are you furthered if you seek to steer a way between the two extremes; for the Greek mean is the modern ideal of perfection, hard, if not impossible to attain permanently. And in what do mystical humility and philosophical pride end, but in absorption, extinction, Nirvana? How should Chateaubriand the artist, and I who, in these fair days of summer, have evoked the shapes of René, Chactas, Atala, Eudorus, Velléda, and Céruta against the living back-

ground of the dreamy woods, desire to tread the Buddhist, Sufist, Christian paths that lead to the waveless sea of Love and the formless Infinite, to Negation and Indifference, that lead to peace, but the peace of self-oblivion, non-existence only?

Doubtless I am the mere sport of words, of *idola fori*, —even as any and every metaphysician, moralist, scientist, positivist. The steeds that bear the chariot of the soul are ever twain, as Plato told. We can but yoke Pride with Humility, Egoism with Altruism, and all the pairs of inimical brethren. Job is proud in the innocency of his suffering, but Job humbles himself in dust and ashes. . . . And yet, "henceforth be warned, and know that pride, howe'er disguised in its own majesty, is littleness!" The lines of Wordsworth and their context come upon me like a recollection of childhood. Childhood? At least, in boyhood and early youth, my heart was "kept pure" with the "holy forms of young imagination." Pure, simple, because not yet conscious of complexity. And the warning? Wordsworth holds up for warning a proud solitary, a "lost man," whose youthful ardour and hopeful ingenuousness were chilled by the world's neglect. The world, as he should have known, owed him no service; but at once with indignation he fled apart, "and with the food of pride sustained his soul in solitude." By Esthwaite's strand he wearied of the desolation that was symbolical of his own unfruitful life, and would turn with tear-filled eyes to the glamorous mirage of unselfish action. . . . What if the solitary could not have fled to the solitude of Esthwaite's strand? What if he must linger on amid the world, his heart never "warm from the labours of benevolence" because he is poor, because as

Aristodemus and Pindar knew, it is "money, money that makes the man" and permits active kindliness? What if he envies the lot of him that is held up for warning? Envies him, in that he was free to live out his discouraged life with Nature for companion and consoler, free to be subdued to her moods, free to be wisely passive. . . . Nay, I should only be free to be melancholy. Nature consoles not. Pedler and Parson inform at full length the Solitary of "The Excursion" that Nature should console him; but Wordsworth knows better than they, he finds he must leave the poem unfinished, and the Solitary unconsoled and inconsolable.

Pride and truth; German philosophy.

But what of the pride of intelligence? The human intellect! Truth is absolute, and Truth is one; but Truth to man is complex, relative. He that is modest looks on Truth as a matter of *nuances;* and he that is not modest is not greatly furthered. What can be discovered by reason beyond antitheses? The attempted syntheses of philosophers are but memorials of vain ingenuity. Take the history of German philosophy for the last hundred years for example. Science must end in mystery, in theology; Eighteenth-Century science ends in Deism. Deism is duality; the human and the divine, freedom and necessity, nature and spirit, mind and matter, faith and reason are divorced irreconcilably. On the side of reason, Kant is a speculative sceptic, defining the limits and conditions of experience; on the side of faith, an ethical theist, desiring, postulating the substantiality of the noumena of God, and freedom, and immortality. Jacobi, wandering disconsolately in the desert of Reason, is

fain to find rest in the oasis of Intuition. Schleiermacher seeks deliverance even from the loftiest Spinozistic egoism by absorption in the Spinozistic substance. Fichte vainly shifts from subjective to objective Idealism. But Kant had ruined metaphysical dogmatism, and the Fichtean or general Ego can only dogmatise in the void and object to all previous dogmatism. Man is ever creating the world,—later, he will say, the moral order—and the world, the moral order, is God, and there is no other God than the world—the moral order—which man is ever creating! Schelling is the antithesis of Fichte; for *Ich ist Alles* read *Alles ist Ich* if you would solve the riddle of the universe. Poet of objective Pantheism, renewing Campanella and Böhme, he has discovered the One in the Many, has discovered God, by dint of Neo-Platonic ecstasis,—but, unfortunately, God, he discovers, is only the identification of subject and object, is only the Indifference-point, Unity unrevealed as yet in difference, Spinoza's Substance renamed. And if the less-gifted mortal, incapable of intellectual ecstasy, thinks to find, as Schelling found, the reconciliation of nature and spirit in the sentiment of the beautiful of art, the shade of Kant intervenes to demonstrate that the reconciliation cannot be more than imaginary. Moreover, the Schelling or Fichte of one period refutes the Schelling or Fichte of preceding periods; death alone can end the endless variations of themselves, the different revelations of their unity. Hegel, renewing Bruno and Spinoza and Vico, will transcend Dualism, reconcile Fichte and Schelling, bridge over the gulf that Kant left between reason and faith, knowing and being, phenomena and noumena. But this Unity is

only manifested by antagonisms, the Idea is only revealed in its ever-widening circles of differentiations and integrations. Philosophy is method, but Schelling saw that the Hegelian method would prove negative only. Philosophy and Religion are reconciled ; they differ only in form. Disciples rejoice, and then—disperse to Right, and Left, and equivocal Centre. Richter deduces from Hegelian principles that faith in immortality is the cause of all human woes. Strauss equally claims to clarify Hegelianism ; the Idea, ever engaged in self-evolution, cannot be incarnated in a transitory individual ; Humanity, past, present, and to come, is the only possible Christ, the *Gott-Mensch*. And Strauss, not satisfied with his clear exposition, sojourns a while with Bauer and his school, and finally decides that religion is nothing more than culture. Rothe, text in hand, demonstrates that by the law of evolution, the Church, after self-assertion, must deny itself, and inevitably pass into the State, the new synthesis. Feuerbach, Hegelian, discovers that religion is merely anthropology. Stirner justifies, on Hegelian grounds, revolutionary, socialistic, anarchical Egoism. The disintegration of the absolute synthesis is complete. But Schopenhauer is at hand to attempt a new synthesis. He links Kant and the Buddha ; for what is the noumenon but Nirvana ? And Hartmann must find it necessary to explain, rectify, and restate Schopenhauer. And the disciples who have sat at their feet discover that Dualism, that Manichæism is the logical deduction of their principles. . . . And if, remembering Comtist sneers against metaphysics, you turn to English, to *à posteriori* Evolutionists, you find John Stuart Mill—not blessed, it is true, to bear the full Evolutionary

gospel—posthumously confessing the reasonability of Manichæism, and Mr. Herbert Spencer stranded in a Cartesian Dualism of mind and matter, discerning dimly a Spinozistic Unity of Substance that is unknowable.

But, we are told, humanity will win happiness when it ceases to ask why, and whence, and whither; when we are Neo-Hellenes, unconscious of the division between self and nature. We have but to discard Gnosticism for Agnosticism. . . . So, seventeen hundred years ago, an Alexandrian school, weary of Transcendentalism, yearned for the dawn of peace, for the advent of "The Great Ignorance." And, somehow, Emperor Hadrian found fervent faith at Alexandria, fervent faith in a deity that Agnostics, Gnostics, Platonists, Jews, Christians, and Gentiles unanimously admitted and worshipped—Gold.

Pride of intelligence! How is it possible? Nature, as Pascal knew, furnishes nothing but matter of doubt and disquietude; and Intelligence is doubt and disquietude itself.

The remedy of faith.

Simplest and surest of all remedies is Faith. Simple? That precisely is at issue. One of the Eastern sacred books affirms that a man's faith is a man's self. But self is dual, if not multiple. The simplest duality is that of the angel and beast in man; but, setting aside the beast, the angel has emotionality and intelligence, and their reconciliation is to be despaired of.

It is now no longer possible for the theologian to simply, crudely proffer salvation by belief only, or to accuse inability to believe as though it were wilful blindness and wilful viciousness. It would almost

seem as if it were the scientist who had inherited the mantle of dogmatism. They are prone to reject from the pale of salvation demurrers to hypotheses and provisional syntheses. What they term the "great act of faith," the saving belief that laws, observed sequences of causes and effects, will reign as they have reigned, that phenomena will repeat themselves, is the barest, most readily to be complied with of their demands. Needs must one apply to their experimental truths the remark which the German transcendentalists applied to the theologians;—that which is merely historical brings no blessedness, has regard solely to the understanding. Hypothetical evolution of nature, historical observation of nature, historical evolution of creeds,—these can interest the curiosity at most, these can give no blessedness.

Am I not much in the same case with Madame Roland? Could I not almost repeat after her: "I am pious when my heart is troubled, but when my heart is at peace my mind wings its flight, would fain believe, and yet must doubt." Or again: "religion does not change the mind of any individual, it assimilates itself to his nature, and rises and falls with that nature." Or again: "mobile in opinion, I am fixed and firm in conduct and sentiment." Or still again: "I had no interest in changing belief that I might change my morals, for these are established once for all; I was tempest-tossed in doubt, but untroubled by fear." In a word, I comprehend, I sympathise with Jacobi, Christian at heart, sceptic perforce. It is the merest matter of self-respect, of self-interest, not to condemn oneself to the inevitable consequences, the unspeakable Hell, of passion and injustice. I freely obey the cate-

gorical imperative of duty, without a struggle, but without enthusiasm. But, then, the collective human intellect can find no complete, stable Truth; and if you resolve that that shall be true which satisfies your individual heart, you limit truth to the requirements of an arbitrary personality. You must needs allow with Semler, the rationalist, that no two men have the same religion; *quot homines, tot religiones.* I suppose that Semler also realised that no two rationalists are rational in the same manner. But he must have shirked the thought, for otherwise, he had assuredly not broken silence to vainly attempt proselytism.

But, for debilitated faith, there is recommended the therapeutic of habit, of Pascal's *abêtissement.* Act as if faith were true, and you shall find in time that faith is truth. Clough formulates the speedy objection: "Action will furnish belief,—but will that belief be the true one?" And did not Leibnitz, the admirable would-be reconciler of faith and reason, say of theologians: "their mental dissensions should convince them that their pretended internal evidence is not divine." And faith is fitful even in those who are agreed that it is a sin to reason, to doubt the goodness of the Father. The saintly Eugénie de Guérin, sorrowing that her brother should trust for guidance to the fallacious marish-lights of reason, is still herself the prey of melancholy, even as Maurice. She must cry: "be it so. Let this inexorable ennui, veritable basis of human life, hold its ground. To bear with all things, and to bear with oneself, is wisdom." . . . But I will re-read Pascal. At least, I can approach these questions with a calm quite unknown in my early youth. . . . But is this calm a progress or a decadence? . . .

Faith and reason : Pascal.

It is not to be denied that Pascal possessed all the qualities that go to the making of the scientific man, the type that is to displace, we are told, the saint as object of admiration. But Pascal the scientist finds science all-insufficient, the day of "conversion" dawns, and henceforth he is not only dead to the pride of life, the lust of the eye, the desire of the flesh, but also indifferent to science, art, and literature. He is resolute to forget all save God. But to love God is to have pity on them that know him not ; he would have them turn from the things that perish, and seek the Eternal. He will reason with them, bearing testimony to the faith that is in him, that haply they may abandon their dance of death. He will apply the Cartesian method, and build up certainty on a basis of universal doubt. He will offer them a saving creed, a sure refuge from doubt. And his life is in complete conformity to his creed ; he carries out his principles of asceticism to its logical extent ; he makes no compromise with human nature. Sure that "the true state of the Christian is malady," he is happiest when suffering in body. He is inhuman to himself, and cannot tolerate in others the display of innocent affection ; rightly, logically so, if "whatever is of man is abominable." And, as men and saints accomplish that which they do not intend, sceptics find in the fragments of his questionings and would-be demonstrations of verity their choicest store-house, and plain men shudder at the narrative of his life, as that of a victim of hallucinations, morbid, distraught, insane.

Eloquently, lucidly insane, at least, like Rousseau. Yet, since men and saints know not what they are and what is their faith, though they formulate themselves and it again and again, it is an endless matter of question

and dispute whether he was subtlest of doubters or firmest of believers. Did he call Reason to his aid in proving his faith, and falter in dismay at the result? Or, by way of being all things to all men, was he only descending into the arena to conquer his opponents with their own weapons; was he, with a perfect histrionism, more sceptical than the sceptics, that so they might the more readily listen to him? Or again, did he doubt and believe in turn, in endless oscillation, with equal earnestness and sincerity? However it may be, present-day critics mainly find in him a dogmatist, a fanatic of faith, unshaken, untouched by doubt.

His method, apparently, is something of this kind :— Man is dual, angel and beast, capable of infinite grandeur and immeasurable meanness. Epicurus may rightly exalt, and Montaigne deservedly abase human nature; the dogmatist may confide in the power of the reason, and the pyrrhonist, distrustful, suspend all judgment. Man is a compact of contradictions; dogmatists and pyrrhonists are right, and are wrong. Religion, revelation, the mysteries of sin and the fall, alone reconcile that which, otherwise, is irreconcilable. . . . But if this demonstration be sufficient to confirm those who are already Christians, the sceptic might still declare himself unconvinced. Pascal will meet him on his own ground. All things are subject to doubt, including the supposition of a future life. Man is incapable of defining, proving, or refuting God and immortality; and this being so, such questions are reduced to a calculation of probabilities, for and against. A choice of probabilities must inevitably be made, for to refrain from choosing is still to choose, a choice, that is to say, between the possibility of infinite, endless

blessedness and that of infinite, endless misery. The choice cannot be doubtful; and, moreover, submission to the yoke of faith during the brief years of mortal life is easy, is pleasant. . . . But the sceptic may still object that he cannot believe, even if he would fain believe. Then, he must stupefy himself, *s'abêtir*, reduce himself to an automaton. Habit is second-nature; if he will conduct himself as though he believed, he will ultimately come to believe.

The majority of men are not rigid logicians, much to their comfort, it may be. Fortunately, or unfortunately, blind, they fail to see the necessity of making a definite choice once for all, of being impaled on one or the other horn of a dilemma. They are preserved from introspection, from intense, long questionings, by constant contact with others; daily needs and cares press on them, abstract duty presents itself to them in the tangible form of the duty of "getting on" in the world, of prosecuting their own interest, and thereby that of their nearest. If they are born with the moral instinct, they vaguely resume for themselves Butler's mitigation of Pascal's doctrine; they more or less dimly recognise that if virtue does not always ensure happiness in life, ill-doing at all events never satisfies. As far as circumstances allow, and often in spite of circumstances, they are just. To put it coarsely, they "make the best of both worlds." They fulfil their duties fairly well, without narrowly inquiring what duty is. Honesty is useful, they find; and the good conduct which is profitable in this life will surely, they suppose, be reckoned to their merit, if there be another. For the excesses of asceticism and fervour they have no inclination, instinctively shun

them as prejudicial to health and the due transaction of their affairs ; they possibly admire examples of such excesses, but do not feel called to imitation. A place in the world is assigned them, and their energies are engrossed in maintaining or improving it. They comfort themselves, if needs be, with the multitude of their like-minded accomplices, and are assured that God is merciful. . . .

After all, is Pascal, the passionate logician, completely logical ? Could he be logical, under the circumstances ? He maintains that to disobey reason is to bring unhappiness on oneself : "it is the agreement of self with self, the constant voice of one's reason, and not that of others, which causes belief." Yet he holds that the natural man, unaided by grace, is as incapable of right reason as of right action. Pascal, then, as a subject of grace, will be able to confide in his reason. Not so : "God is known to the heart, and not to the reason." . . . "We are incapable of knowing what God is, whether God exists or not." So sure is he of the utter incapacity of reason, that he will wave aside almost contemptuously not only the traditional proofs derived from miracles and prophecy, but those derived from "natural religion," and finally the "ontological" proofs. A master of negative criticism, he is yet a mystic, a lover. As love and criticism cannot dwell together, he is ecstatic, unquestioning lover and *alles-zermalmender* critic by turns, hopelessly, dolorously dual. Or if we are to allow that his faith was wholly unshaken, he must be likened to Jacobi or Schelling, who direct criticism against all save their mystical intuition. To the reason, he will grant, religion is a "folly." But, since reason itself is folly, why should

he illogically essay to prove that which is incapable of proof by that which is vitiated in its essence? He will clear the path to belief by provisionally doubting all things. But he that has once been visited by the malady of scepticism is incurable, is sure of relapse. So intrepid, so uncompromising is he in doubt, that his Port-Royal Editors had to garble his manuscripts. He is bold, precisely because he is convinced in advance that reason and faith have nothing in common. But, then, why reason at all? Why not impose silence on his own reason by the method he recommends to others? He wishes, indeed, to convert, and the proselytiser must needs speak and reason. Yet he is sure that God has willed to blind the many and enlighten the few. His own conversion he ascribes to inner light; why then essay another doubtful, impossible method, and fondly interfere with God's own method? Dante and Calvin, compelled to meet the same objection, can only bid us not presume to penetrate the secret counsel of the Godhead, for His judgments and justice are inscrutable and incommensurate with ours. "Let us not be ashamed," Calvin must write, "to confess our ignorance." But why, confessing ignorance, do Dante and Calvin and Pascal still fondly furnish us with Theodicies?

Faith and reason, continued: the men of the Renaissance and the "Polybians."

The Italians of the early Renaissance could pursue truth with never a fear that philosophy could be the enemy and not the handmaid of theology. Dante could freely innovate and alter accepted beliefs, could be heretical, with the heresies of a loft heart, and yet pass for a good theologian. Gradually, the Renaissance thinkers were led to discern incompatibilities between

autonomous reasoning and reasoning on authoritative premises. They hold by the authority of reason, with the constant, added clause, *salva la fede*. They decline, as Albertus Magnus declined, to *miscere credita cum physicis*. They believe that which reason bids them believe, but they also believe that which the Church bids them believe. If their beliefs come into collision, they profess, more or less ironically, complete submission to the Church. They believe, as Christians, that which they cannot believe as philosophers. Vanini in self-justification quotes St. Augustine's: "I would not believe the gospel were it not for the authority of the Catholic Church." A few from self-respect preferred the glory of martyrdom for philosophic truth to compromise; they are ready to be courteous—*il credere è cortesia*, as Galileo said with a smile—but are judged uncourteous, and fit for uncourteous treatment. The vast majority put in practice Cremonino's *intus ut libet, foris ut moris*.

Lip-service is now no longer compulsory, but modern scientists, in spite of examples of sincere dualism in faith and science, will not allow this thinking "by double entry," can scarcely credit its honesty. It is true that, while maintaining that reason is assuredly paramount, they permit agnosticism in matters of faith. But men are conscious that agnosticism, which pretends to be neutral, is *de facto* hostile. Neutrality is not possible; *ne pas parier, c'est encore parier*, as Pascal says, not to make a choice of probabilities is still to choose. Positivism, for instance, professing neutrality outside the region of verifiable truth, virtually denies metaphysics. Now, the majority of men dislike hostility and denial. Moreover, they fear the moral

and social consequences of this elimination of the absolute. To resume their fears in formulas of Vico: —the third age is the "human age" that succeeds to the divine and the heroic ages. In this third age philosophy tends to supersede religion, and men practise virtue without religious sanctions. But all men are not philosophers, and philosophy itself has an inevitable tendency to scepticism. Civil equality is accompanied by inequality of wealth; the sceptical, refined, and effeminate find themselves face to face with the positive, envious, and aggressive. On corruption follows anarchy, which is ended only by despotism or subjugation by a stronger, less corrupted race. Or more briefly, with Campanella:—the corruption of religion heralds the dissolution of society.

Machiavelli and Hobbes reduce religion to an *instrumentum regni*, a political instrument. But Machiavellism and Hobbism, by right instinct perchance, however uncritically, have become terms of reproach. Let me then style Polybians those philosophers and men of the world who, convinced of the possibility of autonomous morality, would have enlightenment for themselves, and, out of concern for the commonweal, what they deem superstition for the majority. He that was the friend of Scipio Æmilianus, he whose effigy was set up by his countrymen side by side with those of Aratus and Philopœmon, opined that the most salutary of the Roman institutions was superstition. In fact, the Roman State was held together by a quality which was considered a reproach by other weaker nations. But the Roman statesmen were wise; they had regard to the multitude, they knew that no nation can possibly consist of wise men

alone. And "since the multitude is fickle and full of lawless desires, of unreasonable anger, and of violent passion, it only remains to curb them with invisible terrors and such-like machinery." In short, Plato's useful State-lie put into practice on the largest scale. The modern Polybian, the obscurantist for the sake of the commonweal, if a *laissez-faire* constitutionalist, would desire that the State should not discourage the natural fear "which first made the gods." Paternally governed, he will be a Fontenelle, with his hand full of wisdom, but his fingers closed tight over his treasure. Or a Goethe, with his "useful results" which alone are due to the people, for "the faculty of lofty comprehension is rare, and consequently, in ordinary life, it is best to keep one's own counsel, and merely reveal so much as is necessary to give us an advantage over others." In a state menacing dissolution, a Voltaire, confident that reason will triumph—"at least among *les honnêtes gens*, for the mob is not made for it." Or, under a republic, a Renan, painting the portrait of Spinoza, with many a glance at his own image in the mirror by way of help, paints the ideal sage who knows the solution of the world-enigma, but only reveals himself to other men by tolerant kindliness. . . . Indeed, the Polybian, to be perfect, should be wholly silent, abstaining from word of mouth and word of book. And this the Polybian never is. Reason being the bond between man and man, reason being love, he that deems he reasons will be impelled to proselytise. Spinoza is thus only too eager to impart salvation to his correspondents according to the presumed measure of their capacities, and suffers obloquy and misapprehension, as was to have been expected. The Polybian

tells you all he knows, or thinks to know. Fontenelle will take you aside, and let you peep through his fingers ; will hand you his *Dialogues des Morts*, wherein you may learn the great secret that all is nothingness, and nothingness is of no great importance. Goethe will test your sagacity by veiling truth—or rather, truths ; for he cares not for co-ordination—in symbols ; but his symbols represent nothing not divulged in the exoteric teaching. He can deftly float bubble-microcosms, and is as ready as a Polonius to ratify random interpretations of their significance. For was not the admirer to assimilate from his doctrines, his symbols, just that which he was capable of assimilating ? And besides, symbols serve delightfully for mystification, not of self only, but of others ; a symbol means that which the inquirer supposes it to mean ; and as no two inquirers can agree, the profundity of the symbol is thereby established. And Renan—a modern Carneades, is he not ? Combining with his own order of eloquence those of his fellow-ambassadors to Rome, Diogenes and Critolaus, capable not only of sublimity, but of simplicity, and of moderation. Nay, ready, the modern Carneades, to add also coquetry. Truths are infinitely interesting, possibly because they are inextricably mingled with error ; Truth, indeed, would be colourless, uninteresting, without the admixture. If you would be a cheerful optimist, a Carneades-Renan, you have only to recognise that error is the necessary amalgam of truth, that truth can only be presented in fables, and that all fables, scientific, philosophic, moral, religious, are . . . fables, charming, yet fables. You have only to spend your life in a long and happy "grand tour" through the realm of Ideas.

You may gather pretty pebbles on the roadsides of this realm, this El Dorado, pebbles which cast a glorious lustre, which are rough diamonds and rubies, and yet are common pebbles until you carve them into matchless form, and so win admiration and a sufficient reward in current coin. . . . Well, at least, Renan is most eloquent when holding a brief for the Good ; though, like Carneades, he can fully state the opponent's objections. But Carneades believed this much, that to plead for and against is the readiest method of finding truth ; Carneades was held by his disciples to have been one that inspired desire to set forth in quest of truth. Doubtless he hoped to be an *excubitor dubitantium*, as Campanella styled himself, while Renan is a supreme artist, readiest advocate for and against any and every theme, inspiring admiration of his versatility and virtuosity, a Carneades—despairing of truth. Yet he is most eloquent, most artistic, when pleading for the Good, though he have a lurking suspicion that to be good is to be dupe of Machiavellian Nature.

The same, continued.

Thinking of Polybians, I am minded of the three grades of perfection in the mediæval system, personified as Umano, Spoglia, and Rinnova, which Dante will translate in time into Inferno, Purgatorio, and Paradiso. The human soul, according to this system, can only behold Truth in symbols, till such time as it be cleansed of sin, purified of earthly taint, till it transcend the region of opinion and reach the region of the Idea. The Polybian sage evidently is one who deems that he has attained Paradise after briefest halts in lower regions, and who is inclined to consider that Inferno and Purgatorio are institutions that ought not to be lightly abolished ;

a too frequent jail-delivery would endanger, or at least vulgarise society, which should be select and limited.

But these Polybian sages, when they condescend to speak exoterically, when they return from the realm of the Idea to the Cave, to the realm of opinion, differ as greatly in their accounts of the realm of ideas as though they had never left the realm of opinion. They agree to differ profoundly, agree at most that they might as well have never left the Cave, agree with one another and with Imlac, friend of Rasselas, that "long journeys in search of truth" are not necessary, that "truth, such as is necessary for the regulation of life," that a sufficient rule-of-thumb is readily to be discovered at home. They agree also with Voltaire that all men have the same morality, possibly agree that all men have the same religion,—yet as soon as ever they essay to formulate their common creed, though Faust seems to Gretchen to say much the same things as other people, only in somewhat different language, they seem to each other to differ, they agree to differ, profoundly. The unenlightened dweller in the Cave, indeed, the "good gorilla," Renan would say, by dint of brain-sick chimæras, has behaved itself quite in a wondrous way, has acted on the whole charmingly, and risen to adorable heights of sentiment. The pity only, then, that Renan should feel called upon to strip it of the consolatory fictions it has created for itself, at the risk of reducing it to Caliban once more. The pity also, one might add, that not only Polybian sages confide their secrets to their admirers, but sincere sages freely proclaim the truths they have discovered; for disciples will pry into the *Begriff* that lurks behind the *Vorstellung* of the truth delivered to them, disciples,

enfants terribles, will draw logical deductions from the given premises which wholly dismay the sage. Really, the sage should remember that it is dangerous to confide a secret, to proclaim a truth, even to reeds. French philosophers, convinced that what was truth for aristocrats was also truth for plebeians, browbeat Madame d'Épinay when she ventured to object that popular beliefs were useful as a bridle to the uncouth populace. Madame d'Épinay was a wise Polybian, for your wise Polybian would be silent, fearing Revolutions, Democracies, and Socialism. But your wise Polybian, despite of warning example, is never wise. The wise Polybian, could he be wise, would also avoid the error of his brethren of the Italian Renaissance, would not jest, even amid his equals, at ignorance and asinity, mindful that the ironical turn at length their weapons on themselves, that irony is, in the last resort, subjective and negative. But, remembering this, he would be a disillusioned Polybian, would find that the serene happiness of playing with esoteric ideas is the greatest unhappiness.

The serenity of autonomous sages.

How do these self-centred, self-dependent sages maintain themselves in joyful serenity? If I turn to the Greeks, our masters, the Greeks who are held to have been serene, childishly unconscious of any antagonism between self and the world, of any gulf between spirit and nature, I find myself mingled with gloomy self-conscious wanderers in a "meadow of discord" and bewilderment, to use the Empedoclean phrase. I behold arrogant mystagogues and humble neophytes, pedlars of prudential morality, ascetics and voluptuaries, simple folk and sophists, aggressive materialists and unbending idealists, despots democratic and

aristocratic, unscrupulous opportunists and rigid justiciaries, splenetic satirists and languid elegiasts, gossiping loungers in the market-place and timid victims of oppression. . . . Why continue a random list? Empedocles shall describe the Hellas to which he was exiled at birth from the court of the gods. "I lifted up my voice and wailed aloud when I beheld the strange region to which I was newly come, region wherein dwell Murder, and Rancour, and the legions of direful Destinies, and manifold Diseases. There night abides and far-flashing Day, blood-stained Strife and grave-eyed Harmony, Beauty and Shame, Swiftness and Sloth, lovely Truth and darkling Uncertainty, Birth and Decay, Slumber and Wakefulness." . . . I have forgotten the next lines of linked antitheses. In brief, a world of mingled good and evil, then as now; a world of antinomies. . . . But Empedocles is a mystic; let me, then, pass to the practical Romans. As self-consciousness deepens, isolation and melancholy extend their reign. The Stoics, even should they refuse to recognise the justice of Carneades's refutation of Stoic dogmas, are isolated, melancholy. Driven back upon themselves, they find that self is emptiness, and long for speedy oblivion. . . . Trace the progress of Renaissance Humanism to its dissolution by ironical criticism, and you might scornfully judge the sage to be one who guards himself from all absolute denials and affirmations, who, keenly comprehensive of the real, equipped with prudence, adroitly compasses a moderate, sufficient store of worldly gear, and passes his days in elegant carelessness, serene because superficial, amiably sensual, imaginative, cultured. An Alberti, for example. But this prudential Epicurean compromise was merely an

ephemeral compromise. As to serious mysticism succeeded frivolous indifference, so the latter yielded place in turn to austere negation. Machiavelli proclaimed man to be his own Providence, his own Fortune, revealed the survival of the strongest and cleverest, the lion-fox, as the law of life. . . . And Machiavelli is renewed by the modern prophets of autonomous morality. Might is right; and he is most righteous who is the most energetical in his own interest. As though the Homeric warning were not always in season: "O hapless one, thy strength will prove thy bane."

The remedy of evolutionary Utopia.

But Humanists and Polybians are out of date. Let me turn to the Neo-Machiavellians, to the scientific Evolutionists, to the dreamers of the Golden Age that is to come. What marvellous visions are theirs of the Heaven on earth that is to be! The men of the future will possess, be possessed by, an "organic morality," will intelligently adapt themselves to their environment, will not be troubled by any conflicts of conscience. We of the present age, indeed, are troubled and blessed, thanks to Evolution, with a conscience, that is to say, we are already enlightened egoists when we obey the dictates of our hereditary conscience which resumes the prudential fears of our forefathers to transgress social commands and prohibitions, their experience that self-interest is pursued by avoidance of anti-social actions. But the happy men of the Golden Age to come will not be troubled with a conscience, will be further, unspeakably blessed in not possessing or requiring a conscience or the sense of obligation at all, since to them moral conduct will be natural conduct. And this supreme blessedness—which many of us possess

already, since to many of us immoral conduct is repugnant, unnatural, and yet are miserable, doubtless because our lot is cast in an Iron, not in a Golden, Age—this supreme blessedness will necessarily result from the action of natural selection and heredity, and possibly also from the action of Evolutionary legislators. Which legislators should surely select Jacob as their patron-saint—if saints were not despicable to Evolutionists—for Jacob was an Evolutionary legislator, in the matter of four-footed, if not of two-footed, sheep.

The natural scientists, these Epicurean-Utilitarians, these heirs of Diderot and Lamarck and Malthus, these Hegelians who speak of Evolution in terms of Nature and not of Spirit, are not content to be merely the secretaries of Nature, to register phenomena and gather up the links of causation. They burn with zeal to ameliorate man's lot, and yearn to furnish humanity with a rational morality, a scientific basis of morals. Mankind has long suffered by reason of deductions drawn from false principles, self-deluded to its own harm with reasonings about the life according to Nature or the life according to Reason—which latter, again, with a little verbal dexterity, can be held to be the life according to Nature. It is high time to awake from delusion. Ontology is discredited—for a season ; types of ethical theories are irreconcilable. Indeed, one might, in utter weariness, desire peace at the hands of the scientists, if there was any hope of their succeeding where moral philosophers have failed. *Fiat lux*, and let us wonder no longer, say, that a Kant can declare morality the essential basis of religion, and a Hegel exactly reverse the order of the terms ; that the one can regard religion as "that which is in part" and

which shall be done away, flung aside as a "childish thing," when autonomous morality, "that which is," shall have "come," and the other regard morality as implicit in "the absolute religion." . . . But, after all, Hegel maintained philosophy was the *Begriff* of that of which Religion was only the *Vorstellung*, the pictured symbol, and both he and Kant therefore are practically at one. But philosophy is discredited, for a season, and new brooms—I beg pardon, new Herculeses—with Rivers of Biology and Sociology at command, are ready to cleanse the Augean Temple of Morality.

No difficult matter, thought Littré. Nutrition is the biological principle of Egoism, Generation of Altruism; the latter, as more complex, is therefore superior. Yet Littré must have reflected that the new gospel was hardly likely to produce many miracles of Altruism, for he speedily delivered still another gospel. A = A, the two terms are equal; therefore one man equals another, and my neighbour is as myself. Unfortunately, the majority of men have a deplorable, unscientific tendency, we might object, to overlook such equivalence. . . . However, Evolution, borrowed from the ontologists, and renewed on the side of natural science, will solve the problem. Yet, unfortunately again, as all things are in a state of development, to Evolutionists, as to benighted Intuitionalists, there can be only an ideal standard or criterion of conduct, since it is in the dim and distant future that all men shall be able to order their actions to the well-being, the happiness of themselves and others. Moreover, though Evolution implies material necessitarianism, the natural scientist, turned moralist, must avoid announcing, at whatever cost of logic, that man is an automaton, that

man *ist was er isst*, that virtue and vice are merely like chemical products. Nor will natural selection, and the survival of the fittest, furnish us with a scientific basis ; we must evolve morally, and unscientifically, an altruism "by antithesis," or otherwise we are left to the admiring contemplation of tigers and Borgias, and their grandiose "Sceleratezza," their adroit "adjustment of means to ends," blamable only if unsuccessful. Yet as this altruistic morality "by antithesis" is nebulous to a degree, ought we not to read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*? The pity that Fielding should have wantonly spoiled his code of morals by proclaiming his irony! Pity too that La Rochefoucauld should have deemed it necessary to add by way of preface to his *Moral Reflections* that he is only considering man in the deplorable state of Nature, even as the Church Fathers had done, thus falling into the error of Pascal, who was anxious at all costs to humiliate human pride.

But, besides Natural Selection, there is another mode of Evolution, that of adaptation to environment. Surely, the ethical Evolutionist is on firm ground at length! A long farewell to the Heraclitean and Hobbesian state of nature and its war of each against all. We seem already to descry the Golden Age that is to come,—the Golden Age which heralds the catastrophe of equilibration. From materialism, from necessitarianism, from private Machiavellism, we can turn to Utilitarianism, to altruistic Utilitarianism. Poor John Stuart Mill, logician doing strange violence to his principles with his preferences for a "discontented Socrates" to a "contented pig," with his refusal to accept Bentham's mnemonic doggrel as all-sufficient hymnal

and declaration of faith! That it was not given him to listen to the new gospel which reconciles wrangling intuitionalists and empirics, reconciles egoism and altruism. For, thanks to Evolution, we have a conscience, and this conscience is the sum of hereditary instincts. . . . But is this conscience the transmitted instinct of self-preservation? For, if so, I am thrown back on "the survival of the fittest," the *bellum omnium contra omnes*. No, conscience is the verdict of past society on actions that promote or retard the well-being of the tribe, the race. Remorse is a revolt of the social instinct when we have violated it by obeying the self-regarding instinct. But what if men remorselessly persist in refusing to listen to the altruistic, social instinct? It is answered, personal needs and desires must yield before the interests of the social group. But who is to judge of the interest of the group, the species? The group, Society as a whole? But Society as a whole used to approve of slavery, and the punishment of heretics; nay, Society still approves of slavery, and punishes by exclusion those who question, or act counter to, conventions. Macaulay can but smile at the uniformity of disapprobation which Byron encountered, and yet, according to Mr. Bain, this was a sufficient criterion. George Sand, till she was released by age like Sophocles from the tyranny of the passions, cared not for other approbation than her own, for other duty than that of obeying passion; George Eliot was altruistic in a manner that the tribe did not approve. But still, once more, these and their like lived in transitionary periods, —(what period is not one of transition?)—and they that live in transitionary periods are subject to the conflicts of social and anti-social tendencies, are prone to

melancholy—melancholy, the consciousness that the universe is out of joint, and the fear that it will ever remain out of joint. In the Evolutionary Millennium, when Evolutionary philosophers shall be kings, and kings Evolutionary philosophers, the crooked shall be made straight and the rough places plain, all men will intelligently adapt themselves to the social environment, and melancholy be unknown. At least, we are assured so.

At present, however, the two modes of Evolution, egoistic and altruistic, are a thesis and an antithesis, once more. Reconcile them in a synthesis ; discover, with Aristotle and Littré, that nutrition and generation are identical ; and you must still proceed immediately to divide them as renewing the type, the one in the individual, the other in the species. The Evolutionist at present will side with Man against the State, or with the State against the Man, as a mere moralist might, according to the bias of his temperament, and the exigencies of his polemic. He can reconcile the pair of antinomies in Utopia alone, less cautious in this than the unscientific moralist. If the unscientific moralist be a Matthew Arnold, living in an individualistic country, he is like to judge the contemporary individualism, moral, religious, social, political, as excessive, and exalt "the notion, so familiar on the Continent, and to antiquity," of the State as "the organ of our collective better self," much as Xenophon and Plato exalted Sparta at the expense of Athens. If, on the other hand, he be a Scherer—whose destructive criticism of theological and metaphysical consolations will not allow him other consolation than the sorry one of disinterested detachment, of contemplative acceptance of whatsoever is—living in a centralised state, he

will admire by contrast the liberty of the Englishman, and deliver himself of the opinion that it is in France, and not in England, that the individual is in a state of "absolute isolation," is an "organic atom," as it were. The most one can say is that there have been and will be epochs of syntheses, to use Saint-Simon's phrase, in which the State absorbs the Man, and epochs of analysis, in which the Man is paramount. And, of course, in any epoch, synthetical or analytical, there is always a minority in opposition. . . . With my innate sympathy for minorities, for remnants and forerunners, it is as well that I live not the age of a crow, a stag, or a Wandering Jew, since, in order to be consistent, I should be continually running counter to myself, and opposing my own victory, in the course of the ages!

The Evolutionist is specially at a loss to reconcile the two modes of Evolution. On the one hand, evolution is furthered by the free play of the individual, and Mr. Herbert Spencer will side with Man against the State, denounce "The Coming Slavery" of State-Socialism. On the other, a complex, highly organised society implies a hieratic subordination of functions and classes; its principle of growth is an increasing reciprocal interdependence, accompanied by an increasing Specialisation; and Mr. Herbert Spencer, denouncer of hero and despot worshippers, is led to indulge in Renanian Utopias of patriarchal despotism by mandarins, by king-philosophers and Prosperos holding in subjection democratic, individualistic Calibans. But, of course, this is a matter of the Golden Age, and meanwhile, Mr. Spencer must continue to hold a brief for the Individual against the State; though, again, in the interests of future society, he

sides with the State in its endeavours to check the free play of the individual, and countenances the repression, say, of the practical socialist, who will not rest content with dreams of the Utopian future, of the practical Spencerian, who, recognising with his master the lamentable contrast of present society with that of savages, turns savage himself by way of accelerating reform, of the self-deemed fittest who chooses to survive by methods not tolerated by criminal codes. Alas! the ideal Evolutionary moralist is the Arab, who carefully removes the vermin that troubles him, and however often it may return to the charge, refrains from other interference with the free play of the individual flea; but, as things go, in our present provisional state of society, the hapless Evolutionist must at present approve, and in the future command, the interference of society with the individual much in the manner of the irritated, flea-bitten courtiers of whom Mephistopheles sang, and not in the manner of the unconsciously scientific Arab.

Evolution and the remedy of socialism.

But the votaries of progress, positivists and evolutionists, offer us an all-sufficient comfort; we, heirs of all the hapless ages, may fail and founder in the night, but the dawn will yet bless the sight of happy generations. We are ignoble self-seekers if we care for other reward than the consciousness that we are co-operators with God, that is to say, Humanity and Nature, in this founding of the Kingdom of Earth that is to be, if we need other motive for moral effort than the hope of a future happy social state. Forsooth, it is a mighty step to have abolished Slavery, and we are wholly despicable if we allow ourselves to imagine that progress is only the feverish change, the application of inefficient

palliatives, that the new slavery implied by Industrialism is other than a transitional stage. Our remote descendants will dwell in Utopia, and we should be happy in the thought that they will be happy.

Some form or other of Socialism, indeed, seems inevitable. Given a general indifference to thoughts of another life, a general disbelief that another life shall amply make good the privations endured in this, and the present form of society is doomed, the fears of the Polybians are like to be justified. If this life be all, and happiness is material enjoyment, or rather the free development ensured by the possession of material goods, the majority cannot and will not tolerate the wonted *paucis humanum vivit genus;* will not consent any longer that their toil and privations shall serve the leisured few.

But can I do other than marvel at the confidence of Socialistic theorists. Dreams of fanatics are accomplished—for it is only the fanatics who accomplish anything,—but the fact is always the mockery of the dream, the accomplishment is the irony of the ideal aim. Gross and rude are the temples built with hands that loomed so fair in the mind of the architect. And even were Socialism, in the sense of equality of goods, possible and congruous with human nature, all present theorising is surely premature and vain. Here as ever there are antinomies, antinomies irreconcilable. For example, the Man and the State:—on the one hand, the hideous evolutionary law of competition, the ruthless strife of Ishmaels; on the other, the tyranny of a Socialistic government. Either alternative of the dilemma is equally detestable. Men are born unequal, and a social state, founded on the principle that each

shall be set in the degree of hierarchy appropriate to his faculties presumes that there shall be slaves and demi-slaves, even as now, toiling to allow the leisure of the few. Moreover, since the law of action and reaction is supreme, if an age of Socialism succeeds to an age of Individualism, Socialism in turn will grow intolerable, and men will seek to fly from the ills they know and embrace intolerable Individualism once again.

A Socialism that should not be a tyranny is a Utopia; and Utopia is, and ever will be, a land of Nowhere. Athenian sages thought Utopia bore a great resemblance to brutal, military Sparta. Modern dreamers choose to forget that Utopia is a small city, with a small fixed population, stable no less in institutions than in population. Multiply Utopias, and farewell to peace; international courtesies are mainly those of war. Moreover, the individualist reasonably forecasts that the Utopians would largely emigrate into the countries of the outlying barbarians to escape ennui and inanition; for equilibrium is stagnation, distress. Were even the disturbing influence of Hunger and Love —those prime motors of human life—banished from a perfected social state by free-trade in passion or by state-organised selection, they would long for a source of bitterness to rise and flow through the palling Arcadian meads. Nay, for very novelty, they would resort to thoughts of immortality, and so disturb the harmonious equilibrium of which they were weary.

Meanwhile, till mankind shall so have progressed as to have elevated itself to the happy, thoughtless condition of bees and beavers and social-birds, of the brutes that perish, those brutes that are the envy and marvel of the philosopher, lovers of order and harmony, ful-

fillers of the law of Nature, "red in tooth and claw," —what were the best course for those who, in an age of Progress, or rather of Analysis, of Individualism, of Decadence, of Transition (for once again, what age is not an age of transition ?), are excluded by temperament or circumstance, or both combined, from the arena of strife for gold and existence ? I know not, unless indeed I were to side with Clough, as I have wished to be able to side, and essay to trust that he is wise who abandons the culture of the intellect, learns the culture of the soil, emigrates, marries, rears a robust, simple-hearted brood, and struggles healthily with outer Nature. But such a course is only for the strong and stalwart. Moreover, the present-day Educationalist is concerned only to increase the ranks of the *déclassés*, the cultivated envious superfluous population ; the Roman ideal of the agriculturist is far from his dreams. . . . For him that is delicate of body as well as mind, for my brethren, I could but counsel the learning and application of some light manual toil. More leisure would they have for thought than if they were to join the crowd of combatants who strive to gain and maintain their ground in the "respectable" professions. Of course such sages, such mute inglorious Spinozas, would also have to dedicate themselves to celibacy and poverty. And further, thought is melancholy. . . . I can but smile at these counsels I offer. What a meagre gospel to proclaim ! Happily I am a silent preacher. Or rather perchance, a physician trying to heal himself—and aggravating his disease.

The rain has fallen incessantly throughout the day, and still falls. The worthy Dr. Johnson scorned the Slavery.

man who allowed his state of soul to be influenced by the weather. But unless the heart is forcefully preoccupied, joy comes with sunshine, and sadness with the clouds. Nature, it is true, is a-moral, or immoral if judged by human standards, by human morality, which is a protest against Nature. You carry your joys and sorrows to Nature, and she furnishes you with a background which is mocking or sympathetic, as chance has it. The "pathetic fallacy" is a method of art; and, as such, is employed at times by Nature, the unconscious artist. On the other hand, as we are a part of Nature, her moods induce corresponding moods in us; the "soul of the world" assimilates us to its moods of the moment. To-day, spleen and ennui reign without, spleen and ennui would reign within, did I not rebel as best may be. I have played joyous allegros on my violin. I have flitted from book to book, seeking distraction, avoiding the while my poets of melancholy, whom I reserve for hours of sunshine. Thus do I mock stepmother Nature in my turn; or rather, by reading indolently my melancholy poets when Nature is holiday-making, I attemper melancholy to a sweet sadness this side of pain.

Yesterday I wrote of slaves. Long ago, also, I wrote in this book the words "a modern slave," and all this day of sullen rain the phrase has recurred again and again with the nauseous persistence of some commonplace musical phrase that forces itself on the unwilling memory. To banish it, I have turned to see exactly what Aristotle has written on the subject. . . . *Eadem sunt omnia semper. Eadem omnia restant.* There is change only in form and fashion. Now, as then, the majority are slaves; a slave is a living instru-

ment conducive to the life of others. The division is eternal between the majority who serve as means to an end, and the slender minority who are that end. . . . A domestic slave, then, is a living instrument conducive to the life of a single person; the *βάναυσος* (artisan, labourer, man of business, professional artist) is a living instrument conducive to the lives of a number. A modern domestic may change his service, may sink by "independence" to the position of a *βάναυσος*. Sink, for the latter, holds Aristotle the judicious aristocrat,—what thinker is not aristocratic?—is ignoble and incompetent, or almost incompetent of virtue, incompetent in body, soul, and intellect by reason of his occupation. In brief, as Taine would say, *le métier déforme* Sink, for there is "a natural helpfulness and friendship between the master and the slave,"—did not Chateaubriand, weary of distressful freedom, yearn, in a moment of ennui, to be the slave of a kindly master?—while the relations of the *βάναυσος* to his employer for the time being are "unnatural, and dependent on law or force." Force? Yes, for he who is in possession of money has a right of force over the work of those who need money. That is to say, of bread-winners, of those who cannot eat bread unless work is given them, the more favoured are those who serve a master with whom they are in daily contact, and the less favoured are those who serve a firm, or the general public. Either class, favoured slaves or hapless *βάναυσοι*, must sacrifice their lives for the benefit of the leisured. That a few may live the life worth living, the rest must toil. *Paucis humanum vivit genus.*

Logic would lead me to Ruskinism, Tolstoïsm. But logic has little to do with life. Inequality is the

law of Nature; we all toil for others; life is essentially sacrifice; thoughtless leisure brings ennui, and thoughtful leisure discovers that life is not worth living; the only happiness that is possible is the happiness one strives to give to others, who again are only happy so long as they can delude themselves to believe that they are happy. Yes, but this slavery is a question of degree, and degree passes into kind. There is a woful difference between my position, in this year of leisure, and that of the poisoned wool-sorter, the consumptive mason, the "sweated" tailor, the miner with his life in his hands. And yet the world laughs at those who have lamented the life of industrial towns, as prophets mourned over sinful cities. Or if the world does not laugh, it spurns the thought that civilisation and industrialism are antinomies. Fourier and his like are judged to be fools in their generation; things must be as they may; town-life is civilisation, town-life is progress, and progress is a virtue with "put money in thy purse" for categorical imperative.

There may be free men with the bodies or the souls of slaves, and slaves with the bodies or the souls of free men. Aristotle is sorry that it should be so, but he and society cannot help it. To call men slaves and ignoble if slaves to vice, noble and free if virtuous, whatever be their condition in life, is an ethical refinement in the application of the word "slave" which Aristotle raises for a moment and then dismisses as not regarding social statics. It is a refinement akin to the "freedom is obedience to moral law," the *summa Deo servitus summa libertas*, or the intellectual, artistic freedom, the "concept of deliverance" of Schopenhauer. The manual of the Stoic slave was a revered revelation to

the Emperor; an Adam Bede is as possible as a Coupeau. And men are slaves of passion, *cuique deus fit dira cupido;* slaves of dogmas social, theological, and anti-theological. We are all slaves of circumstance, of heredity, of personality; *quisque suos patitur manes.* And many seek to escape slavery to their own personality by abdication, voluntary submission to a creed, a dogma, a man. What else is hero-worship but this voluntary obedience to a master of intrinsic moral superiority, a "natural master," as Aristotle would say? To Aristotle, Carlyle, Froude the hero is a king of men by divine right, representative of impersonal law, predestined king politically as well as morally. The pity only that potentates, whose right is might, whose might is right, who are born to, or achieve leadership, mainly compose the throng of Plato's "incurable souls,"—for such is the baneful influence of power—incurable even by remedies of Tartarus. But hero-worshippers ever judge with Plato's Socrates that one man of sense should rule over ten thousand fools, conveniently holding the while that they themselves are far other than fools, deeming that they are a law unto themselves, approving with Socrates' own Socrates that Homer's Ulysses should appeal to the reason of the chiefs, and apply rough words and rougher chastisement to the rank and file. Moreover, hero-worshippers conveniently fail to recognise any such divinely appointed leader of men, philosophic king or kingly philosopher, among the men of their own times. They will confess inferiority to the dead alone; at most, when young and generous, to some living sage whose yoke is easy because he cannot compel obedience. Among the dead, indeed, the choice of heroes is great; but the hero when chosen is found to be mortal, and

therefore peccant, imperfect, limited, — exceptional moreover, as placed in circumstances that cannot occur again and do not apply to us. One is reduced to eclecticism . . . and eclecticism furnishes confused light and little warmth. . . .

Evolution and ethics, continued.

But to return. At the least, "the altruistic enthusiast" should remember with Thomas Hill Green that the case is not clear in favour of the assumption that the effect of such character and activity is an addition to the aggregate of human pleasure, and that it is doubtful whether ethical development does not involve a large renunciation of pleasure. But the Socialist will not hear of this, will not remember John Stuart Mill's melancholy when he found, after careful thought, that "great joy and happiness" were not likely to ensue should the changes in institutions and opinions which he looked forward to be even completely effected, that the end had ceased to charm, and therefore, naturally, the means toward that end. "I felt that the question was whether, if the reformers of society and government could succeed in their objects, and every person in the community were free, and in a state of physical comfort, the pleasures of life, being no longer kept up by struggle and privation, would cease to be pleasures." . . . Clearly the hope of the Socialist is hopeless, and we are driven back on personal wisdom, on autonomous morality. But the scientists who search in vain for a scientific basis of morals must deprive us, in the interests of Truth, of that conscience which Butler and Kant and Newman recognised as an absolute and infallible guide. Mr. Spencer informs us that "the sense of duty or moral obligation is transitory, and will diminish as fast

as moralisation increases." Conscience is evolved, and has its origin in the struggle to assert self, to live. In its evolved state it is merely the sum of certain social instincts accumulated through the centuries, "the voice of man," in Clifford's words, "ingrained in our hearts, commanding us to work for Man," the voice of our Father, Man, within us. Virtue is a habit, as Clifford, after Aristotle, told us, informing us further that Theism in the past had had no influence, except in pernicious directions, and that Humanitarianism—and Mr. Huxley agrees, plying the Positivists with satire—will have no moral influence in the future. The spring of virtuous action is the social instinct, which was set to work by the practice of comradeship. But the comrades perceive, as Clifford perceived, that conscience, the social instinct, is at war with Nature, that Nature suggests obedience to her voice rather than to that of the tribal, the extended self. And many comrades seem to find that the practice of comradeship is compatible with all manner of practices that are pleasurable, and therefore "increase vitality," and yet to which, in Spencerian phrase, the application of the word "bad" is "most emphatic." In spite of the prophets of the Tribal Self, men will persist in interpreting the voice of their hereditary conscience to be a command to "work for" themselves. The nation, humanity at large, will be mere abstractions, powerless to influence conduct. Duty will be the duty of "getting on" in the world; *rem*, *quocunque modo*, *rem* will be conscience's most constant behest.

But once again, all will be well in Evolutionary Utopia. Suppose, then, that egoism and altruism are balanced in a happy compromise, that there are no

conflicts of selfish and social tendencies, that each and all act spontaneously in accord with the conditions imposed by the social environment, that each and all are blessed with a plenitude of existence. Will Utopian mankind be happy? Unfortunately, as Mr. Spencer knows, the wider and clearer is our knowledge, the deeper is our consciousness of the mystery, the darkness that bounds our knowledge. These Arcadians will have leisure to think; and thought is melancholy. Thought will ever be metaphysical, transcendental, though morality become spontaneous, organic. Though their needs and the means to satisfy these needs be in equilibrium, they will ever be haunted by ideals, unsatisfied desires. Acutely sensitive—for sensitiveness increases with the increase of intelligence—they will pose in anguish the insoluble, inevitable problem of immortality. Intellectual, they will wonder why Nature "groaneth and travaileth." Happy, they will wonder why Nature cares so little for the happiness of her other creatures. Moral, they will wonder why Nature is supremely unjust, supremely immoral.

Ethics and "æsthetic religion."

There can be no authority in any empirical system of morality; and least of all in attempted psychological explanations of the *origines* of conscience, and hypothetical histories of the development of its potentiality. As Scherer knew, that is not truly ethical which is not also metaphysical, which does not transcend phenomenalism. But Kant, as Schiller wrote, "has made the law of duty repulsive," or rather perhaps, obedience to an abstract categorical imperative is an unemotional obedience. Schiller, wishing to join Love to Law, pointed to Christianity, "the only æsthetic religion,"

as the required synthesis. Yet Schiller was a theist at most, gradually recoiling in disgust from the rationalism, "the enlightened reason," which was his own early boast, and which, he found, in keen disappointment, "led to no higher morality, but the rather supported arguments in favour of egoism." He endeavoured to seek refuge in an "æsthetic religion," but an æsthetic religion is only the religion of men who accept as poets what they reject as thinkers. And Schiller's epigram against the ethics of his first master, Kant, was prompted by Goethe, whose "æsthetic religion" was that of self-culture. Now, self-culture is the natural selection of that which is pleasurable, the assimilation of whatsoever, in the realm of thought or the realm of action, is conducive, by being pleasurable, to self-preservation and aggrandisement, to the increased duration and intensity of life. That is to say, the æsthetic religion of self-culture is a chief minister to that Egoism from which Schiller was seeking to escape.

Is escape possible? Suppose it should come to be gradually understood, as it was understood by Greek philosophers and sophists, that man is the maker of the gods, that man the anthropomorphic mythopæist attributes, as Goethe would say, to a single God all the perfections of which he perceives the germs within himself. Would not the fears of the Polybians be realised, would not the decadence of morality be at hand, even as decadence followed enlightenment in Greece? Suppose it should come to be generally considered that "man is the measure of all things." The heroic in poems and dramas, and in poetical, dramatical crises of life, is ever based on the sense of the supreme claims of divine Right; remove this sense, and the possibility

of heroism is removed. A generation or so may conduct themselves much in the way in which their believing, unenlightened forefathers conducted themselves, and deem they have attained a higher morality (I have already rehearsed Vico's account of the decadence of every "third" philosophic age); but will not the men of these generations be like those incense-caskets of which Carneades spoke as retaining for a while their fragrancy though they are empty? For an example on the largest scale of empirical, agnostic morality, we must turn to China; and yet who does not shudder at this example of a civilisation which yet fulfils the dream of positivists and progressists, which is based on reason, on common-sense, on the love of mediocrity, which recognises no other merit and privilege than those which are tested and acquired by competitive examinations. . . . Is there a bathos in the last words of this last sentence? Perchance not. . . . It matters not.

The remedy of ecstasy.

In default of any possible scientific basis of morality, I am driven to personal eclecticism, to private wisdom, to autonomous morality, to αὐταρκεία, self-sufficiency, internal adequacy. . . . An hour of disinterested insight, repeat the sages, is enough. To have lived in the eternal order, to have kept the mind separate and distinguished from objects of appetite and events of time, to have been the contemplator of all time and existence, to have beheld all things under the form of eternity, is enough, is ample, is sufficient immortality. Life can offer no more; added hours and days are supererogatory, idle repetitions. . . .

Dawn, then, timeless hour of Neo-Platonic ecstasy,

of mystical absorption in the absolute unity of pure indifference! Or,—since I am humble, and presume not to soar too highly—Come, thou mystic vision of the manifestation of the absolute co-equality of Nature and Spirit, of the train of dialectical deductions of modes and attributes, of the process of the Idea realised in differentiations and integrations of differences. . . . I smile as I lisp the jargon of Spinoza, Schelling, Hegel, in vain effort to utter the ineffable. . . . And does not the μονόχρονος ἡδονή, the voluptuous moment of the fiercely sensuous Aristippus correspond on the side of sense to Neo-Platonic ecstasy? Both are fleeting moments that will not be stayed. Nay, did not Hegesias, disciple of Aristippus, holding with his master that pleasure is the sole good, conclude with the Neo-Platonists that indifference is the sole attitude of the wise, since pleasure is impossible, incapable of realisation—did not this Cyrenaic logically become "Death's Advocate"?

Let me be content with an hour of "wise passivity" to Nature. Why have I brought these pages of self-analysis with me to this woodland haunt of peace? Why analyse at all? It is enough to yield to the influence of the hour, to watch the golden orb sink cloudless, to eye its roseate aureole paling, gradating aloft to faintest green and to spectral blue, and the responsive purples of its couch of wood-crowned hills, fold after fold, mist-veiled, wonderful. . . .

And, on ecstasy will follow melancholy. After the slumber of the Ego comes its dolorous awakening. After intensity comes depression and distressful re-action to the mystic, to the sensualist . . . to me. In an hour I must return in the after-glow of the sun

that will have died to my narrow room, gradually narrowed also to myself, feeling the reverberations of the ecstasy of an hour grow fainter and fainter. Even so is the mystical intuition of the absolute unity but a lark's flight. Upward, upward . . . a momentary pause . . . and then a swift sullen descent from Synthesis to Theses and Antitheses, from Unity to Multiplicity, from Unity to a miserable Unity in Difference, a Unity which embraces vain earnestness, pain, patience, sorrow, toil. . . .

The same, continued: The Humanists and the Greeks.

Wisdom, did I write above? Peace, rather, peace! has been the passionate cry of men baffled in thought and action. Yet peace is held to dwell in the temple of wisdom. Peace, serenity? As well hope for happiness, since both presuppose a delicate equilibrium of faculties and environment hardly to be attained, or if attained, preserved. Peace, harmony, to be won by wisdom? "Oh, wisdom, thou speakest like a dove," retorts Goethe's wounded eagle to the dove that counsels gentleness and moderation. There are those whose due element is the storm; Chateaubriand, wise in the knowledge of the vanity of all things, by age reduced from a René to a Rancé, is peaceful much as the dying volcano is peaceful. But for the contemplative, for them that have renounced even before experience, for such as I,—is not peace to be won by wisdom? Nay, is not knowledge another name for sorrow, and contemplation for melancholy? To know oneself is to be conscious that one is "an outcast on this world, the bondsman of insensate strife," even as Empedocles was conscious. To know, to be wise, is to be disillusioned, is to be submissive to the mediocrity of

the actual, is to be the craven sport of fate. Experience, which fires the youthful to indignation, chills the aged to tolerance ; he that has lived the lives of others, that has contemplated the world from the narrow cell in which fate has confined him, is aged already in his youth, is tolerant—scornfully.

But were not those Renaissance Humanists aright when they judged that wisdom brought peace? At first, indeed, still hampered in their mediæval swathing-bands, they fondly thought that to be wise was to be an adept in syllogistic Ethics and Rhetoric. But soon came Dante with his Convito, truer "Treasure" than that of his master Brunetto ; came Petrarca and his fellows. The wisdom of the ancients was rediscovered ; not that mere timid, sordid wisdom of worldly prudence, consisting in saws and proverbs meet for Polonius ; not the pedestrian wisdom that deals with the means of worldly success. Virtue was known to be a habit, virtue was an art ; conduct was exposed to no doubt, all the Schools past and present could meet in unison on this one note. Moral philosophy was judged the sole true philosophy. To progress in such wisdom was to progress in virtue. This was supreme wisdom, to set bounds to desire, corporeal and intellectual. Prudence would govern the impulses of the heart, prudence would counsel the neglect of insoluble questions and the candid confession of sane ignorance. A tranquil optimism was the sure result of moderation, of avoidance of all excess ; to cultivate virtue, to be of good will towards all men, was enough. . . . But the dream soon died away. Dante turns from the Convito to the Commedia, Petrarca is led to mystic aspiration, to asceticism, to pessimism, by his conviction that on

earth is no fruition of desire, that the things of this world, as Dante sings, *nulla promission rendono intera*, promise only, never fulfil promise. To calm succeeded the anxious hauntings of the problems that cannot be stifled. There is no possible return to the calm wisdom of the ancients, — which calm is only a coinage of the brain, a beautiful figment of the imagination, a creature of nostalgia, unhistorical, uncritical.

Well enough says Bacon that philosophy propounds many things beautiful in speech, but remote from use. A scientist has discovered that the flower is a malady of the plant; the fairer, then, the flower, the more corrupt the state of the plant. Let Hesiod speak of primitive Hellas, and Thucydides of its maturity. . . . What an ingrate I am becoming. But it may be that I disparage Grecian wisdom, only because I have made it my own so long, and have grown weary of it. In time past I took Grecian wisdom at its fairest and shaped it to my purposes. I measured the limits of my nature and the limiting, narrow environment in which it must move; it was σωφροσύνη to discern these limits and to keep resolutely within them. My eclectic wisdom was a negative wisdom, a delicate form of ascetic abstention, a graceful submission,—for so, under my circumstances, was it wise to modify my ideal wisdom. To execute my meed of daily toil, dutifully, irreproachably, to bear myself towards those with whom I must come into contact with a gentle reserve, to retire with all possible speed to my lonely chamber, there to forget my own mean personality in disinterested contemplation, to reduce the cost of food and clothing to its lowest limit that so I might garner modest materials

of contemplation, books, prints, portraits, figured landscapes of climes I was not to visit, increase my slender store of music from time to time, and amass some tiny sum wherewith to defray a fortnight's freedom on the marge of a summer sea—this was my intent and practice. . . . Egoism, egoism only, though it were contemplative, disinterested, almost impersonal! I had elected myself into the minority, and in this minority I companied only with the dead. I had severed myself from the broad current of humanity. I was a haughty, isolated individualist, even as the Stoics. . . . Such calm, such quietism should be but as the period of rest, the breathing-space between effort and renewed effort. The passions should not be quenched, but directed to noble ends. The true ideal of the Humanists was *l'uomo universale*, the man who developed to the full, in ideal order, his whole faculties. . . . But was I not forcibly retained in my side-eddy? How, in my poverty, could I consort with others? None cared to abandon the flowing tide even for a moment to seek me out in my solitude and obscurity. I was not bidden to share men's joys, and their sorrows I could not hope to alleviate. It was wisdom to have submitted myself to circumstances; I had shaped mean material to its fairest possible form. I had modified *τὸ καλόν, σωφροσύνη, τὸ μέτρον*, beautiful goodness, prudent wisdom, due measure, as beseemed my circumstances; I had exercised *αἴσθησις* as it was possible for me to exercise it. And must I not resume such way of life after this year of freedom—freedom of which I seem to avail myself only to transgress the first laws of wisdom, to infringe the *θνητὰ λογίζου*, the *μηδὲν ἄγαν*, to overstep the due bounds of moderation, of opportune human thought.

The remedy of culture; culture and religion.

But, since humanity is ever in a state of development, to us, the heirs of all the ages, is offered more than the wisdom of the Humanists. To us it is given to find consolation in a religion free from the taint of the supernatural discredited by Science. Wisdom might leave us cold, even as it leaves me cold,—and such torpor, such "absence of habitual admiration" is irreligious. Religion is enthusiasm, and the substance of religion is culture, which is "a threefold devotion to Goodness, Beauty, and Truth," the enthusiasm of morality, art, and physical science. . . . Such is the religion on which Strauss falls back after two attempts to write a *Leben Jesu* which he judged inadequate, and the author of *Natural Religion* after an essayed *Ecce Homo.*

But whence is to come the motive power of the newer, more perfect religion? Enthusiasm is the creature of moods. Possessing culture, I am possessed of melancholy. Self-analysis is self-torture, is wilful aggravation of misery; self-knowledge is the discovery of inward emptiness. Nay, to attempt to know self is to attempt the impossible, and to attempt the impossible, to overstep due human bounds, is veriest madness, as the Greeks well knew. "Man is a dark being," judged Goethe, "he knows not whence he comes, nor whither he goes, knows little of the world, and least of all of himself. I know not myself, and God preserve me from such knowledge." But Culture, which elevates us beyond ourselves, which frees us from selfishness, can only make us aware of the thoughts and actions of other selves. Humanity is "a dark being," unknown and unknowable to itself, environed in mystery. To be aware of the myriad guesses of humanity at the enigma of its own being is to be sunk in melancholy.

Culture is "a threefold devotion to Goodness, Beauty, and Truth." It is rightly understood that, for the practical life, morality, unconditional, disinterested, is wholly indefeasible and paramount; that virtue is its own reward, and vice entails its own punishment. It is rightly understood that to transgress the moral order is to lose thereby all peace and calm; the brutal, the materialised, the frivolous, as Renan says, these are truly irreligious. But I have never hesitated in proffering complete allegiance to right conduct. The analogy of art and virtue is incomplete; but, to me, the good was the beautiful; gentleness, sympathy, charity, chastity commanded adhesion by right of their beauty. But the performance of duty, the adhesion to right conduct, inspires me with no enthusiasm, frees me not from melancholy, deepens it the rather. The appreciation of, and sensibility to, that which is beautiful in literature, the imitative arts, and music, bring only momentary delight; on enthusiasm follows the reaction of despondency, born of the contrast between the actual and the ideal. I am a mere dilettante, it is true, and not a creative artist. Yet the dilettante is freer than the creative artist, he is not so much the slave of his own personality, not narrowed to a single vision of things, to a special "moment." The dilettante can range through the ages, transcend by sympathy his own race, environment, and moment, appreciate many, varied, contradictory ideals. And if the dilettante is the readier prey of melancholy, precisely because of his largeness of vision, the productivity of the creative artist does not necessarily engender serenity; witness Michael Angelo, Delacroix, Rossetti, and countless others. Of the "religion" of science, I cannot speak;

expositions of natural facts and their correlations leave me cold. Text-books treat of that which happens and the manner of its happening, of the laws generalised from the coexistences and successions of phenomena, they affirm a multitude of experimental truths ; but for me in these affirmations there is nothing emotional or provocative of enthusiasm. How could I desire the enthusiasm of science, since the predominance of the scientific instinct, analogous though it be to the enthusiastic productivity of the creative artist, is as it were a hypertrophy implying, balanced by, an atrophy of other faculties. A Goethe, when he adds to his enthusiasm of art that of science, is the victim of two contrary species of enthusiasm ; the scientific critic of the mature Goethe apologises for his science, the literary critic blames science for the shortcomings of the poet. And the mature Goethe, whose "sublime cheerfulness," according to John Addington Symonds, is a forecast of the results of the scientific spirit, tolerant of literary criticism, intolerant of scientific criticism, falls back on Grecian wisdom, blames as folly the raising of "insoluble problems," narrows himself to the "natural" human understanding, confesses that his life has been but toil and trouble, that the mental comfortableness, the *Behagen* to seek and ensure which was highest wisdom, had been attained not in thirty days out of seventy-five years. Moreover, Goethe, scientist and visionary of the beautiful and eternal, supreme type of the cultured, did not expect, did not wish to be comprehended by the multitude, the majority, the public. The cultured are in a constant minority, half pitiful, half disdainful of the majority, who instinctively mistrust their condescension and virtuosity.

The same, continued.

Thinking of Culture, I am minded of the Golden Book I made for myself in the first ardour of youth. I sought through the literatures for the one supreme expression of each of the many varied ideas and emotions of which I deemed myself capable. What severity I used towards those hapless sages and poets ; rejecting that which I had at first accepted with joy and admiration ; replacing good by newly-found better, the better by the felicitous, rare, delicate best ; eliminating in the final draft of my Book of Hours, of Moods, all but these best—even as an examiner who, in miserable calmness, arbitrates a struggle for survival.

And to what end ? of what avail ? It is years since I opened the book, abandoned for dust to accumulate upon it. This Arnoldian knowledge of the best said and written on each subject, this knowledge tinged with emotion, this expansion of self, this escape from the everyday self to the universal, eternal self, from particularity to generality,—of what avail ? Dead Sea fruit, only. As in my eclectic hero-worship the thought gave me pause that each of my heroes was but a frail mortal whose life furnishes ample material for detraction as well as admiration, whose appreciation varies not only with each appreciator but with his age and mood, so in these supreme expressions of emotions and ideas, or emotional ideas, I could not refrain from perceiving the insufficiency of their verbal manifestations. Words determine thought, and determination, though it be a condition of art, is still negation. *Trasumanar significar per verba non si poria*, knows Dante ; transcendental thought cannot be expressed in mortal words, though all thought that is worth the thinking is transcendental. Thought expressed is

thought belied, sighed Tutchef, mournful Russian lyrist. Alfred de Vigny sorrowed that poetry must lose half its charm in the expression, and preferred the charge of sterility. My Golden Book was to have been a chosen gallery of Fair Ideas, each type in its supreme manifestation ; but not long, and I must look on it as a collection of chill petrifactions. Not only was the Idea more than the sum of ideas, but each idea was incapable of perfect revelation. I was the inferior of the poet or sage in that they had reduced ideas to form, had prisoned, limited ideas ; but I was their equal in that I knew, like them, that the form, however supreme, is wholly inadequate. All that the form could serve was to inspire dissatisfaction with the form, to suggest a reverie similar to that which had preceded this special crystallisation, this precipitation, this birth into prisoning form. Expression is translation, and *traddutore traditore;* the perfume is more than the flower ; the spirit more than the word.

Alas ! the breath of the spirit is intermittent ; the hours of insight are rare. On enthusiasm follows irony and despondency ; sunshine yields to rain, roses fade, and the rapture of the night is spent on the morrow's awakening. Not for long does Mephistopheles abandon the youthful Faust ; and the aged Faust, or the Faust who is old in youth, is a Mephistopheles unto himself. The hours of reaction readily tend to an almost unbroken continuity. Hours of insight ? "No man, in his wits, attains prophetic truth and inspiration ; but when he receives the inspired word, either intelligence is enthralled by sleep, or he is demented by some distemper or possession." So Plato,

who, moreover, with his symbolical psychology, holds that enthusiasm is seated, not in the brain, but in the liver, compact of sweet and bitter. Did not our "Augustan age," the age of "common-sense," decorously abhor all enthusiasm? And yet it is permanent enthusiasm that I crave. Pleasures of the mind—or liver,—ye are as fleeting as other pleasures.

The making of the Golden Book chilled all desire for self-expression. I chose to be inarticulate, precisely because I knew "the best said and written on each subject." I was humble, and not to be roused to emulation by others' achievements, as Goethe was roused. During the last months, indeed, that preceded these months of liberty, I sought deliverance, even as Goethe, by voicing my emotions. After prolonged scorn of expression, and deepest scorn of such expression as I could give to emotional thought, I dallied with the antithesis of my thesis, and allowed myself to suppose that thought unexpressed was not worthy of the name of thought. My little poems, my musical thoughts, my melodies in minor keys, my emotions determined in form, were a deliverance, a comfort, in a manner. Absorbed, I could forget the unloveliness of the streets through which I passed to and from my daily toil; I was no longer exposed to my wonted *fastidium quotidinarum formarum*, my wonted weariness of wonted sights of unloveliness. But now, in these months of my deliverance and consolation—what a deliverance and consolation!—now that I rest at ease on the lap of Alma Parens, I am voluntarily inarticulate once more, save for this confession, this attempted analysis of my melancholy. I cared little for my Golden Book, I care nothing at all for those feeble cries

of my heart,—cries that none have heard, or shall hear. It is enough to be lulled by the music of the brook, to watch the diapered sunlight on the flowered sward. But night follows day, and with the night I confess, unless I am happily all too wearied for confession.

Culture and religion, continued; Platonic love.

Religion is enthusiasm, and the substance of religion is culture. So I wrote, epitomising others, objecting, a few pages back. Surely, then, the Enthusiasm of Beauty, of Intellectual Beauty, would suffice me. Giordano Bruno, capable of *Gli Eroici Furori*, revered Sophia, mistress of his soul, in ecstatic fervour. The One, the Infinite, was incomprehensible, unattainable; yet the quest of Truth, the lover's wooing, was present Heaven. Nay, is not desire sweeter far than fruition? To love Sophia—wisdom—devotedly, unselfishly, even as a troubadour loved his lofty, unattainable mistress, to meditate on the beauty of Beauty, were all-sufficient wisdom. Diotima, she who revealed the mysteries of love to Socrates, Plato's Diotima,—though Plato in later life will not hear of reason-disturbing emotion—would doubtless warn me that I had not "learned to see the beautiful in right order and succession," that I had not observed the due degrees and stages of initiation. To the love of one fair being should have succeeded that of all fair forms; and the love of general beauty should have led me to the love of fair practices, from practices to fair ideas, from ideas to Absolute Unity, to the knowledge of the essence of Beauty. But I divined from the first that I must omit the first stage of initiation. Doubtless I should have loved "one fair form only," gladly

recognising in reverence that the beauty of her mind was fairer, was "more honourable," than the beauty of her outward form. But a Rossetti finds, or thinks to find, that the first degree of initiation is equivalent to the whole; the mysticism which, to Diotima, the hierophant, and Bruno the dutiful disciple, is the final stage of initiation, is revealed at once and from the first to the lover who can proudly vaunt to his lady that "Thy soul I know not from thy body, nor Thee from myself, neither our love from God." But this perverted, vain mysticism, this idolatry of the finite, this spiritualisation of the flesh, this building of artificial paradises,—well, all mysticism, dialectic of heart or head, Christian or Sufistic, wavers on a razor's edge, the abyss of melancholy madness on this side, of sensuality on that. It matters not; the "not impossible she" was, in my case, quite impossible. Had I beheld such a one, I should have loved in secret, glorying in silence, in abstinence from word or sign. Why should I not the rather consider it a cause for thankfulness that I have escaped the first initiation? Haply, the desire to love is the fairest love, and I was worthy candidate for initiation into the Greater Mysteries, without previous initiation into the Lesser. Straightway, indeed, from my earliest youth, I loved all forms, practices, ideas, that were fair. But "the last vision," which was to reveal to me "a single science, which is the science of Universal Beauty," is not to be hoped. I have set fair practices as a thing apart, not to be influenced by theories and their conflict. But Absolute Beauty is merely a negative, logical abstraction, like the Neo-Alexandrian, and transcendental German, Divinity—the One, lifeless, indifferent, till limited,

degraded, manifested imperfectly in the material Many. And relative Beauty, as Diotima knew, is "fair from one point of view and foul from another," "fair to some and foul to others," subject to time and circumstance and mood. I behold fair ideas, but not the one fair idea; I cannot but shift my point of view and find inadequacy, if not foulness, in the fairest ideas.

The same, continued: meta-physical religion.

But the religion of Spinoza, the possession of adequate ideas, the freedom from all passions, does not this suffice? Have not the moods been frequent in which, disinterestedly contemplative, I have looked on my own meanness and misfortune as a passing note in the universal harmony, and on all things and thoughts as the necessary modifications of the two modes of Substance which alone are cognisable to man? Have I not known the momentary calm which ensues on the complete surrender of self, the acquiescence in absolute Necessity? Or, since the artist within me is not to be stifled,—art is sworn enemy of abstractions—why not seek refuge in Schopenhauer's "Concept of Deliverance," which embraces at once the religion of art and the Spinozistic religion of the eternal? Perfect rest and liberty will result on the extinction of personal desire; an escape from the baneful illusions of the senses, from the chains of causality, is open to the disinterested visionary of the All "under the aspect of Eternity." The sphere of the relative, of appearance and contradiction, is transcended, and the soul finds peace in the Absolute, lives the divine life. The effort to exist in the discordant and partial, the infelicity of impeded energy, pass into the tranquil existence in the whole. The voluntary euthanasia of the will

brings release from bondage; the personal self dies that the true self may live. . . .

As though Kant had not dealt a death-blow to mystic, transcendent Absolutes and Substances! As though Neo-Platonic, Spinozistic Absolutes were more than mere negations, abstractions, colourless lifeless figments of the void! Absorption is but annihilation. Moreover, the necessary parallelism of spirit and body precludes long communion with the One that is the All, precludes the reconciliation, the identification of nature and spirit, thought and extension. It is well, it is noble to essay with Marcus Aurelius to "preserve the rational faculties free from the allotments of fate, to keep the mind distinct from the objects of appetite and events of time." Goethe's personal adaptation of Spinozism, his unsystematical Pantheism, was little more than this; like the Roman Emperor, he retired within himself, there to escape as far as might be the fatalities of nature and society. He sought to cherish his genius by regulating its impetuosity; in the doctrine of Spinoza he found the calm, the Stoicism, he desiderated. But did he not also find that "all which is Spinozism in poetical production becomes in reflection Machiavellism"; that is to say, Nature the unconscious artist, and man the conscious artist, produce their works of art, but men and artists, reflecting on inner and outward nature, discover merely a will-to-live, an endeavour to persist in being, a selfish dolorous struggle for survival and plenitude of being. The artist and the mystic must descend to the levels of human life, and descending, they are prey of deepest melancholy. The Spinozist, declining, as he must decline, into the sphere of the relative, must ask himself why the

Absolute lies under the necessity of manifesting itself, limiting itself, of thus producing a world of evil, which evil, though it be a figment of the imagination, of inadequate knowledge, is still evil. Schopenhauer must confess that the moments of deliverance, of mystic, artistic liberty, are brief and infrequent. Even the delicate, contemplative Joubert, that gentle soul who seemed to his friends to tolerate his prisoning body as best might be, was not at peace, was not calm, though he endeavoured—pretended, says Chateaubriand—to be calm.

But mankind is not to be contented and consoled either by bounded knowledge, or—were it possible—boundless. Goethe's Faust and Vigny's Moses, having attained to wisdom, to the steady vision of the whole, sigh that they are no longer men, mere men, ephemeral, bounded. From Paradise they would fain descend again to Purgatory, and exchange the divine life of adequate wisdom for the human life of imperfect knowledge and, therefore, of imperfect will, of alternating joy and sorrow. Gladly would they cease to emulate the stars, "unhasting, unresting," ever orderly, —the stars which Plato and Kant and Goethe despairingly envied, the stars which to Machiavelli were but emblems of mutability. . . . And the boon of return to the conditions of human wisdom granted, they would sorrow that their request was heard. Weary of human wisdom, appalled by human misery, they would yearn for deliverance from the human lot. For mankind can know no lasting joy in acquiescence, in acceptance of the conditions and facts of human life. From contented self-contemplation we speedily pass to prison laments; the Athenian cult of beauty and humanity necessarily yields to Alexandrian mysti-

cism. Even the practical, moderate, agnostic Chinese, adherents of rationality and common-sense, furnish devotees of Laotsev and the Buddha.

The "Might-have-been."

Doubtless I am a weakling, an infirm spirit, a "problematic nature." And, on Spinozistic principles, it is madness to regret or complain ; I am constituted thus and thus, and to wish I were other than I am is as though the clay were to be dissatisfied with the shape to which the potter has moulded it, as though a triangle were to sigh that it is not a square. Yet, looking back on my past, disinterested spectator of that which I have done and suffered, I see not a little that is not unworthy of admiration,—will exerted strenuously and continuously, purposeful concentration, brave effort. Early success did not impair modesty, later constant failure did not daunt. But when self-sacrifice for my nearest and dearest proved useless, when all occasion for devotion was removed, when I was free to think in solitude,—well, I was a Stoic-Epicurean. Haply, it was degeneration, to be cultured and contemplative, gentle and disinterested.

I cannot refrain from indulging in idle reveries of what I might have been, of what I might be still. My self-love, my will-to-live is, I suppose, flattered and encouraged by such fancies . . . a little change in my circumstances—"Oh, the little more, and how much it is ! And the little less, and what worlds away !"—a little ease, the confidence, the expansiveness based on security, on the knowledge that one has a firm standing-ground beneath the sun ! . . . It were as profitable to ponder what they who, beloved of the gods, died young, might have effected, had they lived.

I have been long dead, even as a sage should be dead —dead to the senses and passions. And yet I am a sorry sage, for phantoms haunt me still. I am neither sage, nor man of flesh and blood.

Of what avail, had I been less the butt of fortune, less a vicarious "whipping-boy," perchance, on some principle of compensation, of equilibrium, for some favourite of fortune whom I know not? Given prosperity, should I be more than a dilettante, blind and selfish, amiably contented and tolerant, despicably amused and amusable, respectable because instinctively reluctant to cause suffering to others, and thereby to myself? Nay; I was ever serious. No religion of culture could wholly satisfy me; my innocent hobby-driving, my quickly responsive sensibility to the charms of the delicate, the rare, the beautiful, the Italian days that would be mine could not completely stave off the problem. Take what path you will, and you are brought sooner or later to a stand by the blank wall of fearsome mystery. Nursing in delicious solitude my "dainty sympathies," I should find myself repeating Coleridge's question: "Was it right, while my unnumbered brethren toiled and bled, that I should dream away the entrusted hours on rose-leaf beds, pampering the coward heart with feelings all too delicate for use?" Yet why fondly imagine what I might or might not be, were my circumstances altered. I am what I am, and Coleridge was what he was, Coleridge in whom, despite Spinoza, emotion and cognition were not the same things as volition.

The remedy of music.

Had not the doubting votary of Culture, the baffled enthusiast of Goodness, Beauty, Truth, best

restrict his rites to music? The German religion of Culture, the religion of Goethe, Schiller, Strauss, logically, historically results in the religion of music, the latest art. That which can be formulated is subject to contradiction; and antinomical thought is productive of pain, of mental anguish. Music is vague; and, save in geometry, as Renan would say, the vague is the true. Music is deliverance; music frees us from ourselves, from the discordant world of things. Music is paradise restored; Casella sings, and Dante, Virgil, and the clustering, hapless listeners forget a while that they dwell in Purgatory. Music is mystic contemplation, contemplative of no arid, ideal geometry; music is the true purgation of the passions, purgation that is not annihilation. It awakes our secret joys and sorrows and aspirations; yet transmutes them into tearful joy and emotional peace. Its mingled joy and pain is tempered, gentle, ever on this side of acuity and excess. Stimulant and anodyne at once, its excitement is calm. Appalled by the world-silence that is sole response to my anguished questionings, strong-hearted in Stoic apathy, it is yet mine by music's aid to forget my despair, to be moved to suavest melancholy, to be appeased as by a tender mother's lullabies.

Salvation by music? The "musical soul" that would be blessed is in much the same case as the theologian or philosopher. There are divers, contradictory musical creeds, and sects pullulate. The *odium musicale* is rife, and self-judged orthodox persecute the heterodox, each school of which latter judges itself in turn to be solely orthodox. And your musical eclectic, your doubting, rest-seeking musical Erasmus

must creep into a corner out of the way of strife, there to discover to his sorrow that in his new religion there is ever but a grain of the charming vague to an ounce of the unlovely mathematical, and that he cannot have the grains apart from the ounces in which they are mingled. The vague! One is tempted to transpose Voltaire's gibe against Metaphysics, and apply it to music: when executants know not the master's meaning, and the master knows not his own—then you have Music. And of what crimes the modern "musical soul" is guilty! Does he not fear Plato's wrath when he dares to find the excellency of music in its pleasure, when he foully divorces music from words, when he allows the baneful influence of new-fangled modes and rhythms to steal over him? Did not Pythagoras judge him to be a fool who judged of music by sound and ears; should not he who puts his ears in the place of his mind be banished from the state? Does not the Indian fable warn us that the rapt chorister is in danger of being consumed by his own ardour; and what are the cicalas but the melomaniacs transformed, who took supreme delight in the songs of the Muses, who sang always, oblivious of all things, delivered from care, till they forgot and died and were changed to strident, monotonous cicalas?

Why do I thus idly jest in the matter of deliverance by music, parody my painful doubts and obstinate questionings as to other deliverances, other remedies of melancholy? Deliverance by music cannot concern me deeply. Music is a reconciler of antinomies, but precisely because it is almost thoughtless. At best, the return to the actual, the recoil at the contrast after brief deliverance by music is not so dolorous, so de-

spairing as in the case of the deliverances by the other arts, by intellectual culture. Rhythms in major keys superinduce dreamy moods of joy ; rhythms in minor keys are dreamily pathetic and melancholy ; vitality is heightened by allegros, tranquillity reigns the while andantes pursue their even course. There is little more than this to be exactly said of music, apart from questions of acoustics, and of structural form. There are who, by temperament and training, can evoke changing pictures during the progress of a symphony ; but those, and they, the greater number, who passively surrender themselves to the various moods inspired by various rhythms, can render no account of their visions or their moods that is not merely fanciful, in proportion as the intrinsic vague is formulated. No two listeners to the same music would agree in the interpretation of their moods or visions, if they ventured to tell more than that they, or their visions, had been sad or joyful, and the like. Music at most is an hour's release from thought.

The same continued : The ethics of the Greek drama.

But I were an ingrate to disparage the anodyne of music, music that better deserves the praises that poets have lavished on sleep. Daily toil, arid and well-nigh useless, succeeded, recompensed by nightly leisure to refresh the soul with melody and harmony,—could not this life-programme content me ? I should need to add conduct ; but the principles of conduct can readily be compassed in a single page—nay, the golden rule is almost of itself enough,—and their practice is easy, despite the denial of Hesiod and Prodicus. Did I still crave wisdom, the pictured didacticism of the Greek drama would be ample. I could readily accept

the warning veiled in Æschylus's pedigree of crime; doubtless self-conceit begets irreverence, irreverence insolence, and insolence infatuation. I could recognise that he who renews the offence awakens the ancestral, human curse; and acknowledge the eternal law of justice, τῷ δράσαντι παθεῖν. And Sophocles would elucidate for me Æschylus's oracular "suffering is education" by tracing the cause of suffering to tragic error. Ay, and my ἁμαρτία, the tragic error whereby I made shipwreck of my worldly fortunes, was my youthful inability to follow the prescribed, beaten paths of thought, accumulating on the way such wares and suffrages as are marketable, my inability to postpone thought till such time as thought would be no longer prejudicial to my estate. . . . But do I not scorn success, and pity the successful, with reason? Success begets self-conceit — and the rest of the Æschylean pedigree.

Once more, music is mere lotus-eating at the most, and the "gentle philosophic soul" who loves it all too exclusively must fear, not so much enervation, as Plato thought, but satiety. Man cannot live by anodynes alone. . . . And hard on thoughts of Sophocles come thoughts of Euripides and Menander. Euripides is melancholy; what thesis can he proclaim without feeling called on to proclaim with equal earnestness and truth its antithesis? And Menander, hailed as true ancestor by Goethe, lauded as "ever pure, noble, great, and cheerful"! Graceful, yes; but also true brother of Euripides; contemplating life, he must needs be caustic, tolerantly cynical, an egoistic hedonist, a misanthropist and misogynist, a gloomy fatalist. Darling of fortune, he yet looks on human life as a

Vanity Fair, from whence to escape as early as may be is the fairest boon that can be given to man. And if, in despair, I return to the sculpturesque tranquillity of Sophocles, it is only to learn that the justice of Heaven is consistent with the suffering of the good ; that the good, the just, are brought to sorrow by their very nobleness ; that, apart from the physical woes which fall indiscriminately on good and evil, the moral suffering of the noble, the aberration of the good, proceed from imperfect knowledge—which is all the knowledge that mortal men can have.

The remedy of truth.

Nothing is true but the beautiful. So speaks my temperament. Yet, in these algebraical formulas of subjective, relative wisdom, these succinct apothegms, the converse statement, the contradiction, reads equally well. Should I not distrust the voice of my temperament, refuse all incense to an "idol of the den," seek to transcend the illusions of my temperament ? Nothing is beautiful but Truth. "Truth is my business, and no one was ever hurt by it." So wrote Marcus Aurelius, and I cannot gainsay. "Wretched is he who hath a false opinion about things divine," vaticinated Empedocles, and my heart responds in unison. But what knowledge is more than opinion, and how disengage the element of truth that is contained in all opinions ? "God alone knows the original qualities of things ; man can only attain to probability." This Plato knew, and yet drew distinctions between opinion and knowledge. Truth is the object of my yearning, and of my despair.

Nothing is sacred save truth to the youthful Schiller. To him, as to Pascal, that is truth which the reason

admits as in harmony with itself. But he wonders how he shall avoid unbelief on the one side and superstition on the other, and fears lest the evil day shall dawn in which he shall discover that his reason is capable of self-contradiction. How he fared I have already examined. Lamennais, at twenty, after two long years of soul-consuming melancholy and anguish, takes minor clerical orders in a moment of enthusiasm and faith, and speedily relapses into his old incertitude, embittered in that he has taken an irrevocable step, which he could wish untaken. At thirty he passes through the same stages once again, with a deeper despair. To put a period to his utter wretchedness, he suddenly allows himself to be persuaded to accept the priestly tonsure, and again bitterly repents. In an interval of ten years, two days are his of happy faith, preceded and followed by countless days of melancholy reason. And, after either crisis, he can find no palliative of despair save feverish, frenzied action and polemical, political strife. As though truth were to be won in polemics; as though polemics were not necessarily one-sided, and therefore untruthful, since truth is a whole. Yet truth has long been known, sings Goethe confidently; it is a bond of union between noble souls. Truth of conduct, perchance, practical wisdom; which wisdom, however, varies with the individual and his circumstances. For truth, truth of the reason, can found no sect, as Lessing knew; and sectarian truth is a source of evil, even as sectarian error. Yet if a sage formulates his code of practical wisdom, he founds or proclaims himself an adherent to a sect.

Martyrs of reason there have been, even as martyrs of faith, martyrs in either case. In these present days,

however, men have become tolerant,—because they despair of certainty. From historical experience, historical comparison, they conclude that truth is not self-evident, and therefore they no longer regard opponents as criminals, perversely blind. Each is now free to believe what he can believe, and free to excite what approval or disapproval he can command by public confessions of his faith. He, indeed, is reputed amiable who is silent as to that which most imports; but he is reputed honourable who fearlessly proclaims his view of truth, though such view be regarded as uncomfortable, or even harmful to the well-being of the community. The attitude of him who loudly cries *fiat veritas, ruat cœlum*, commands attention; let such a one take care to hold a safe, conspicuous position, put money in his purse, live long enough, and his tenacity of will and singleness of mad purpose will win esteem. Not to be one of the weaker brethren, clinging to comfortable beliefs, is to assert superiority; and, as the world goes, self-assertion of superiority is wont to meet with acknowledgment.

What is nobler than Marcus Aurelius's confidence that no one was hurt by truth, or Lessing's expansion of the text into "truth must be taught in its integrity, roundly, fully, without reserves or enigmas, with a perfect faith in its efficacy and usefulness"? . . . But Marcus Aurelius knew that certainty was hard to attain, and that "our assent is worth little, for where is infallibility to be found?" Lessing, also, could only proclaim that which seemed true to him at the moment of proclamation, and shrank from systematising his aperçus of truth. The searcher for truth, in proportion to his insight, is modest. If capable of self-detachment

and irony, he realises that all truths contain elements of error, and all errors elements of truth. He may judge that received truths are faulty, erroneous, but he knows, or should know, that the truths he would substitute are also inadequate and erroneous, and that no two critics, or even disciples, will agree in the exposition of his system of truth. For no man wholly understands another.

The quest of truth, continued.

But votaries, Hegelian or naturalistic, of "the Becoming," of Development, would teach me to abandon the standpoint of the individual reason for that of the *Gemeingeist*, the collective consciousness. Truth they tell us, is in the making. Then, collective humanity, seeking after truth, like the individual devotee of hope, "never is, but always to be blest." Truth widens with the process of the suns. But this being so,—and even the intuitionalist acknowledges progressive discernment of moral truth,—truth is no more than a *nuance*, ever changing with the ages. He that should comprehend the *Zeitgeist* in its present totality would only comprehend partial, provisional truth. And the men of future ages must find, as we find, that the human mind is bounded, δέδεται ἡ διάνοια, that the flaming walls of the world hem us in, that mortal thought cannot transcend experience, and cannot explain experience. The systematiser of the truth of his age earns at most a niche in the history of philosophic error, of partial truth. Moreover, the systematiser is always a mere eclectic, since he can only assimilate that truth which is congenial to his own temperament. Hegelian evolution is evolution according to Hegel; Comtist development from theology through metaphysics to positive science suffices Comte

alone, and rouses criticism even among his disciples. They that hail Cousin as teacher are not long in discovering that the consecution of the four types of philosophy, sensualism, idealism, scepticism, mysticism, is no necessary recurring rhythm. For there are families of spirits ; and representatives of these families —reduce them, if you will, to these four—appear side by side in all ages. Nay, the individual thinker must often make shift to reconcile or co-ordinate two tendencies, if not more, within him ; or he may even pass through all the stages, in such order as he may. Briefly, in those ages more especially given to search, in ages of analysis, there is no side of truth that has not its advocate ; and advocates are necessarily partial, prejudiced, incomplete, contradicting all others, and not failing to contradict themselves. Take Nature in its widest sense, including human reason, and the old distich which applied to the written Bible ever applies to the Bible of Nature : *Hic liber est in quo quærit sua dogmata quisque, Invenit et pariter dogmata quisque sua.* And no one understands the dogma of another ; each is in terrible isolation.

The same continued : Leopardi.

We desire truth, truth that would be recognised by all men ; but perchance truth would paralyse us, even as the equilibrium of faculties we desire would be inanition, stagnation. As it is, the criterion of such truth as we can attain would seem to be unpleasantness ; that which we accept with the greatest repugnance is likest to be truth. It is a grotesque criterion, but one which I have often been inclined to accept.

Leopardi reluctantly, sorrowfully discovered Truth, even as Alfred de Vigny ; he beheld the mystery of

human destiny unveiled, was initiated into the secret of the vanity of all things and the necessary infelicity of man. Nothing remained after such a discovery but to cherish a courageous and magnanimous despair, to front destined misery with scorn, to shirk not the acceptance of truth, which, if mournful, was yet truth, and preferable to illusion. Existence was inevitable misery. It was the part of the courageous not to delude himself with idle hopes that happiness is possible in this life, or that there is another recompensatory life in store ; not to seek to lighten present unhappiness by craven resignation. Disgust and weariness of life was wholly reasonable ; the voice of reason counselled lofty despair. Reason was second nature, yet in all men primitive nature subsisted ; they were capable of reason only in proportion as they were capable of transcending the illusions of their primitive nature. The logical conclusion of lofty despair was suicide, but Nature, though she cannot but destine man to misery, inspires them with the fear and horror of death, practises imposture on them, prompts them to self-preservation, seeks to mitigate their inevitable woes by concealing, or at least disguising, them. The reasonable and the unreasonable were the sport of "potent and pleasing phantasms" ; delusive dreams were given by Zeus, by Nature, for consolation. The unreasonable pursue gross phantasms, the reasonable strive to cherish those "magnanimous errors" of glory and patriotism and virtue "which embellish, or rather constitute, our life." Poets encourage bright hopes and pleasing illusions, and thereby stimulate to action ; but the sages, contemplating the inevitable and universal miseries of life, are unable not to despair. It is in

youth, when vitality is intense, when life is full and rich, that men obediently, gladly follow nature and worship illusions; with age, with ever-decreasing vitality, men become capable of melancholy, reason, truth. Similarly, in the youth of the world, men were simple, could believe that happiness was possible, that misery was an accident, not a universal law, could trust fair illusions; but even then a Solomon, a Brutus, a Theophrastus could denounce illusions, could prophetically divine the conclusions of moderns, who in virtue of civilisation have become conscious of complexity, lucidly conscious of misery. While youth lasts, while vitality is at its full, or not yet wholly lost, moderns may resemble ancients in some degree; but they who are old in youth, as Leopardi and his like, sorrowfully abandon poetry for philosophy, illusion for truth. Latest and fairest of all phantasms is Celestial Love, Platonic, Danteian, Petrarchian Love, in whose train attend all other noble phantasms; but Love is a fleeting illusion of the season of youth, and Truth is its implacable enemy, for we are destined not to happiness, but to Death, nay, the deepest thoughts of Love are thoughts of Death. If the ancients could divine that non-existence is better far than existence, the moderns know that wisdom serves but to deepen the consciousness of irremediable infelicity. Socrates might trust that knowledge was preferable to ignorance, but "the ultimate conclusion to be drawn from a true and perfect philosophy is that we should not philosophise." Yet he who has learnt, has been compelled to philosophise, who has known Truth, cannot forget his wisdom, cannot forget that illusions are incompatible with truth. He that has discovered truth must scorn

life, must "scorn himself, nature—the churlish, occult power whose law is universal suffering—and the infinite vanity of all things."

To continue this exposition of Leopardi's view of life—They, then, who trust to the illusions of happiness must find that the possession of happiness is ever to be postponed, that happiness is ever of the future. Happiness is an expectation inevitably foiled, a desire, a sentiment, a conception of the fancy. They that desire happiness are covetous of the infinite, the impossible. To be happy is at most to be unconscious of unhappiness, even as animals. The art of life is the art of avoiding pain ; but the absence of happiness is pain. Pleasure, if other than the freedom from pain, is intolerable ; toil is a real evil which serves in a fashion to preclude unhappy brooding on imaginary desires. Variety of occupation and sensation is a palliative, tends to ward off the pain of thought ; but variety implies intervals of tedium, and cannot bestow happiness. Happiness is non-existence, for existence is mutability, ceaseless transition. He is least unhappy who is content with fewest delights, and restricts these delights to the delights of memory ; but memory, the recollection of past desires of joy, is distress, and contentment is impossible, for we could only be content with happiness. To cease to love self is to be happy, is to be dead in life ; but Nature will not allow us to hate ourselves, or to suppress vain hopes of happiness. . . .

The unsystematic Leopardi is more logical than Schopenhauer, than the builders of pessimistic systems. He offers no consolation other than the scorn of life, the proud, painful satisfaction of knowing that life is inevitable misery. In boyhood he had made himself a

scholar and philologist, had "outraged nature," impaired his health and eyesight, and found that melancholy is aggravated alike by study and abstention from study. Debarred from study, he became poet perforce, followed Petrarch and Alfieri in patriotic laments at the mournful prostration of Italy, joined the Romanticists in egoistic laments at his own unhappiness. To console himself from poetry he turned philosopher; poet-philosopher and philosophic poet, Christian pessimist become philosophical pessimist, he meditated not on his own, but on universal unhappiness, discovered that patriotic and literary glory are baseless illusions, followed Lucian in mocking the conceit of man, laughed at human misery that he might not weep. Born to hope and love, he had loved love and fame, he had hoped; but philosopher, he had learnt that love and hope and fame have no substantial reality. Experience had taught him that hope was always of the future, never of the present; that love of self and love of others was misery; that to be great was to be greatly unhappy. Chafing in enforced solitude, he had imagined the delights of social intercourse, had been beguiled by the illusive mirage of distance; but experience of society taught him that imposture is the animating principle of social life, as it is the animating principle of nature, that social life is a struggle of each against all and of all against each, that social men cannot pardon unhappiness, or lack of wealth and success. Of the two evils, solitude is the least painful; solitude preserves from misanthropy; the solitary is subject to the illusion of distance, he is able to idealise and love men and women when no longer confronted by them. Solitude allows of culture and tranquillity; but yet tranquillity,

Stoic acceptance and submission, is death in life, is monotonous existence devoid of hope and fear and desire; and culture, wisdom, though integrity and mildness be their appanage, is inability to admire. Weary of his inability to admire, weary of indifference, he longs for death, Death the sole remedy; but he is weary of waiting for death.

Leopardi was well aware that his poems and dialogues and "Thoughts" would prove unpalatable, but he scorned dissimulation; if truth is melancholy, he yet relieves his mind by expressing truth; if facts are painful, he yet consoles himself in a measure, and perchance his kin, by deriding facts. He seeks no converts to Truth; he is sure that his writings will have little or no effect, for mankind will ever agree to defy truth, will ever trust illusions which are as inveterate as verities, will ever believe that which it is necessary for them to believe if they are to maintain themselves in comfort, or even in existence. He is ready to admit ironically that his philosophy is false, that the devotees of progress and democracy have right on their side, that money makes the man; he is ready to proclaim ironically his belief that happiness is possible, that other men are happy. He does not fear that the race will ever believe itself unhappy, but he must be allowed to believe and know that he himself is most unhappy. He is convinced of the vanity of life and the fatuous stupidity of man; but he pities, rather than scoffs at, their stupidity; he could desire their happiness, if happiness were possible. He only asks to be permitted to rail at destiny, at the necessary infelicity of mankind.

They who deem that they are happy, or at least contented, naturally seek to dismiss Leopardi and his

importunate truth by assigning his melancholy, his pessimism, to exceptional misfortune. Exceptional misfortune? He is melancholy, and Aristotle discerns in melancholy a symptom of genius; but genius is consolation, though a sorry consolation, and few are those among the sons of Melancholy who are thus consoled. Leopardi was a submissive Stoic, not willingly, but because circumstances constrained him, even as others were and are; he suffered pain and poverty, but these are the inheritance of the majority. He loved, and his love was not returned; but celibacy is often enforced, and often chosen, and he knew full well that beauty is fairer than its manifestations, that women can but suggest the ideas of love and beauty. If by poverty he was *adscriptus glebæ*, bound to his native Recanati, he yet made shift to behold cities and manners. If his parents were uncongenial, his sister was a second self. If they that recognised his erudition were unable to win for him a professorate, he yet had faithful friends who recognised not only his erudition, but his genius —that genius which was universally recognised when once he had taken the due precaution to quit the scene. Temperament, indeed, conforms to circumstance, and circumstance to temperament; a man's judgments are a parcel of his fortunes, and his fortunes a parcel of his judgments; doubtless our ways of life and our ways of regarding life are conditioned by the reciprocal relations of organisation and circumstance, inward and outward destiny. Leopardi's melancholy was innate, and circumstance aggravated it. He was inclined by temperament, by circumstance, to pessimism, as others are to optimism; his vision of truth was one-sided, incomplete. But what vision of truth is not incomplete? He allows

that his melancholy may possibly be due to physical weakness, to morbid conditions of body ; he holds that the body is the man, that magnanimity and capability of action and enjoyment are dependent on the vigour of the body ; he sighs that he is reduced to Stoic submission, that he is excluded from activity. He is a victim of nervous sensibility, and documents are now to hand which show that his magnanimity often failed him. He is sure that those ancients, whom he idealised as Vauvenargues did, beguiled by the mirage of distance, were led by accidental, personal misery to divine the truth of universal infelicity. But he protests, and rightly protests, that his melancholy is due not to his personal suffering, to his material circumstances, but to thought, to reason, to his contemplation of the universal conditions of human life. He traversed the gamut of melancholy, passed from egoistic to disinterested sorrow. He is at one with Christian and secular pessimists, with Pascal and Johnson and Swift and La Rochefoucauld ; and his reason will not permit him other than a Buddhist's consolation, a Buddhist's hope of annihilation, non-existence.

The same, continued: Truth and Indifference.

What if Truth, as the Buddhists suppose, is mere Indifference ? Logic is the sanity of the intellect ; but logical thought, take what avenue it will, speedily presents to me the relativity of things, their ephemerality, their nothingness. All attempt to pass beyond to the sphere of the Substance, the Absolute, is vain ; or, if not vain, is premature absorption in Indifference, in "Absolute Negativity," is Nirvana. What is more subtle, more thorough, than Buddhist logic ? . . . I halt in dismay at the threshold of Truth, stunned by

the strident discord of antinomies. Hegelians sweep proudly past me into the sanctuary, convinced that the principle of development is the principle of contradiction ; and I hear them in the distance chant hymns to the Absolute in crescendo rhythm of triple beat,—affirmation, negation, reconciliation,—each reconciliation being a newer affirmation that calls for its accompanying negation and reconciliation, an endless musical sorites. And when they cease, the Buddhist ascetics, rapt and motionless, drone slumbrous litanies of Truth, in the inmost shrine. With blank eyes turned navelwards, the Cantoris semi-chorus affirm each thesis in its turn, and then deny, and thirdly pose it neither affirmatively nor negatively. And ever the Decani semi-chorus respond : truth is not in affirmation, nor negation, nor the union of affirmation and negation ; truth is indifference. . . . And I halt in dismay at the threshold of truth, fearing to be logical. . . .

Maddened by the dread monotony, I dare at length to lift the portal-veil. If, haply, vision may dispel my fear. My brain reels, yet ere I swoon I seem to behold, not solemn priests, but a riotous rout of orgy-celebrating dialecticians, Buddhists, Eleatics, Heracliteans, Megarians, Eristics, Neoplatonists, Hegelians, linked hand in hand and reconciled, vertiginously circling round and round a dazed host of saints and seers and scientists and men of action, mocking their affirmations and negations, refusing any predicate to any subject, proclaiming the identity of being and not being and all other opposites, vaunting supreme Indifference. . . .

Conscious phenomena we mortals are, and life is action, though life and action be illusion ? " O King,

wilt thou never be wise. That alone is worthy of the desires which can be enjoyed by the senses." So spoke the "king of the logicians," tempting the ascetic Rama, adding the world-old refrain of gather ye roses while ye may. Ecclesiastes, convinced of the vanity of all things, preached Horatian nonchalance, Horatian prudence, Horatian enjoyment in moderation of the good things of the earth. Schopenhauer, occidental Buddhist, propounded an art of delightful living. . . . Illusive pleasure beckons, but still I leave not my post at the threshold of Truth. Pleasure's handmaidens pipe, but I will not dance.

The same, continued: Consistency of thought.

Yet logic is sanity; logic is method. And method is the mind's knowledge of its own operations. But what if the doctors of logic not only differ among themselves, but also differ each from himself, unable to be consistently logical, unable therefore to conform act to thought, even though will and knowledge should be at one with him. Bacon did not allow his scientific logic to trench on the sphere of ethics and religion; like the Italian Humanists, he refused to *miscere credita cum physicis*. But that was long ago. Nowadays we are told that to keep thought by double-entry is to be dishonest. And Bacon's character and conduct were quite other than his intellect; lucidity and integrity were not yoke-fellows. Unhappy Lord of Verulam, if happiness is the accord of thought and act! But, for the moment, let me attend to consistency of thought alone. Spinoza's theory of immortality was dark even to himself, else would he not have hastened to assure that his system of ethics was independent of it. Spinoza the determinist defends the right of society to punish the

criminal. But, as a rule, it is to disciples and not to the master that we should apply for the true logic of a system. Thus Toland drew the principles of Locke to a focus; Hume was the necessary successor of Berkeley, as Lessing of Luther, as the Rationalists of Lessing; the Deists pushed Cartesianism to its logical conclusion; the cold, arid Wolf systematised the generous, would-be reconciliatory eclecticism of Leibnitz. Of a truth, the masters would be the first to disown their disciples, and yet the disciple is only elucidating the first principles of his master; and, if the master be still alive, the disciple invokes him in the name of his first principles to abandon the inconclusive conclusions, the inconsistencies into which he was beguiled by his temperament. Mr. Herbert Spencer is nothing if not logical, and yet the *enfants terribles* who persist in being more logical than their spiritual father wonder that he should seek subterfuges and hesitate to announce firmly and logically that the will of the strongest is the sole moral law. Bahnsen, in the name of logic, rejects as an aberration, an inconsistency, the immanent finality that Schopenhauer supposed in Nature, and marvels that his master could imagine that æsthetic and contemplative delights were possible in a world that is wholly disorderly and irrational. Again, it is of little avail for the logician to be logical; reasoning consistently with his temperament, his innate or acquired prejudices, he does but judge his reasoning to be adequate because it satisfies himself. Newman, by thought, reached certainty and rest, logically reasoned himself into acceptance of Roman Catholicism. But must not critics find that so long as Newman reasons, he doubts, and that having finally posed as alternatives scepticism and

Roman Catholicism—"there is nothing between them" —he elected to abdicate reason once for all; unless, indeed, it be reason to pose, like the Scholastics, such premises as it suits his purpose to pose, and then draw the logical conclusions from these premises. . . . In any case, logic is anthropomorphic, subjective, relative. Logic is simplification, simplification is elimination, and elimination is failure to embrace the whole. The conclusion is implicit in the premises; but the premises, be they what they may, cannot contain the whole of the case. The Scholastics could reason *ad infinitum* and *ad absurdum* because they reasoned on accepted premises, but they who smile in scorn at the Scholastics pose premises of their own which are also inadequate. *Latet dolus in generalibus.* Rousseau's passionate imagination prompts him to startling paradoxes; he vigorously declaims his absolute premises, but, growing ever calmer as he proceeds in their exposition, he more and more restricts their application, till, by the time that his gospel is wholly proclaimed, he has unwittingly reduced his absolute truths to helpless commonplaces, if not repudiated them. Dogmatism, of whatever kind, is false, because it proceeds on inadequate premises. Premises, again, are given by the intellect, and the intellect is mainly at war with the heart. Dante is at wide variance with Machiavelli because the "soul of the world" was Love to the one and Intelligence to the other. Dante is at wide variance with himself, for in the *De Monarchia* he proclaims the Machiavellian principle that might is right. Tyndall could listen to Carlyle's contention that the heart has claims and yearnings which physical science cannot satisfy, and approve more or less Matthew Arnold's insistence on the poetic

basis of religion. The German rationalists mainly evaded the logical conclusions of their premises out of instinctive reverence. Taine essayed a calm, scientific analysis of the French Revolution, and forgot in indignation his mechanical theory of human nature. Surely, materialism is the only doctrine that can be completely logical and consistent because rigidly one-sided; and yet the logical materialist who steadily conforms practice to theory is hardly to be discovered. Besides, the premises of materialism are too simple. And, once again, premises are given by the intellect, which is bounded, and therefore inadequate.

. . . And how my heart vainly protests against the pages like these which my intellect can, and must dictate! . . .

The same, continued: Eclecticism and Goethe.

Leibnitz, with eyes fixed on the future, wrote at the most prolegomena of a possible system of Truth, threw out hints towards a solution of the world-problem, suggested present compromises, despaired of present unity. Lessing, as a wise lover might, preferred the wooing of Truth to possession, quest to attainment; he was a critic, and there are men who find in criticism the reconciliation of dogmatism and scepticism,—a reconciliation which is only an incoherent compromise. Renan, the artist, delighting in multiplicity of ideas, careless of self-contradiction, disdained systematisation as the symptom, or proof, of narrow-mindedness. Goethe, doubtless, was also an arch-priest of Truth, in that he may safely defy any systematisation of his ideas. Airily, persistently, he refused to draw rigid and frigid conclusions from his own premises, to be logical. He would accept no exclusive alternatives,

would fail to see cogent reasons for impaling himself on the horns of any dilemma. He will write a *Vermächtniss* expressly to contradict his *Eins und Alles* because admiring scientists had adopted the latter as a creed, and loftily smile at those who should adopt the one paradox to the exclusion of the other. Truth, he constantly repeats, is that which is appropriate to each man's nature, which nature, again, varies with the season of life ; truth is whatsoever stimulates activity. He refuses to restrict himself to a single way of thinking : as artist and poet, he is a polytheist ; as naturalist, he is a pantheist ; if his moral nature should postulate God, he is ready to satisfy the fresh requirement. A poetical Spinozist, a Stoic pantheist, he preaches ascetic renunciation and sensuous self-development, contemplation and action, exalts the freedom of man and binds him slave to circumstances, bids us seek to attain self-knowledge, and delights that he knows not himself. Scornful of metaphysicians, that is to say, speculative philosophers and subjective idealists who vainly strive to comprehend the non-ego, he eulogises Kant as having defined the limits within which the human mind can move, recognises certainty in the data of the senses alone, and yet leaves a large room to the Platonic divinations of genius, reads his scientific experiments in the light of the metaphysical ἓν καὶ πᾶν, of Heraclitean metamorphosis, of universal dynamism. Style him pantheist, and he will rejoin : I have never found any one who understood the meaning of the term. If he composes ultra-pagan *Roman Elegies*, he also composes religious *Confessions of a Fair Soul ;* autonomous moralist, he yet admits the reasonability and necessity of scientific and moral faith. Faith ? He acknowledges

there is a depth of darkness in his nature which he cannot illumine, and then, comparing this depth of darkness within him to the empty spot in the human brain, and the blind spot in the human eye, finds in this depth the brooding place of chimerical belief in "things of another world," the well-source of mental anguish and disease. In brief, he is for ever escaping from systematisation by scepticism and irony ; he is free because he is self-contradictory.

An incorrigible, incomparable eclectic, consummate critic and supreme creator, Goethe is one who drained the cup of life, and left no source of knowledge untasted. An eclectic, whose eclecticism, so far from stifling originality, favoured its development. Not only had he traversed the gamut of human passions from end to end, and developed all his faculties to the full, but he had taken outer Nature for his province. What wonder that there should be solutions of continuity in his logic and life ? Complexity involves self-contradiction. His very catholicity invests him with a large measure of the enigmatical, paradoxical, incommensurable qualities of Nature itself. Not only is his long career marked out by stages of increasing development (or decline, if you will)—for instance, in the sphere of religion, he relinquishes some sort of a Christian attitude for a non-Christian attitude, relinquishes the latter for that of defiant, self-centred Prometheus, passes thence to a religion of culture and æsthetic morality, and lastly to a mystical reverence, finding in reverence "the dignity, the essential character of true religion"—but his Ego is multiple in each and all of the periods of his development—or decline. He is ever monist and dualist at once ; Spinozist, he discerns the relativity of evil ;

Manichæan, he recognises the constant participation of the principle of negation in all things. Sure that the world is the harmonious development, the necessary manifestation of the Absolute Unity, that God is the world as Idea, and the world God as the realisation of the Idea, he is also sure that even colour, the problem of which was his favourite problem, is due to the changeful mutual aggressions of darkness and light—much as the world resulted to Empedocles from the alternate victories and defeats of love and discord,—is uneasily conscious that matter and spirit are not in harmony, that man must combat nature and usurp an *imperium in imperio;* he vainly strives to escape the fatalities of nature and society, to ignore painful problems and regulate disturbing emotions that he may attain the calm of orderly, circumscribed activity ; he yields though he refuses submission to occult, fatalistic influences which he could not define. Narrowing, concentrating his energy that he may realise in himself the Greek ideal of self-sufficiency, declaring classicism to be sanity and Romanticism to be malady, his Iphigeneia is marred by involuntary romanticism, his Wilhelm Meister is vague and diffusive, unharmoniously realistic, his romantic Faust and classic Helen are parents of a reconciliatory Euphorion who, if not still-born, ere long "falls dead at the feet of his parents," as he allows in his stage-direction.

He is an eclectic, therefore illogical, self-contradictory, incoherent. He is an objective realist, ever maintaining that the sole method, his constant method, is objective, denying the name of poet or scientist to him who expresses personal sentiments, subjective ideas ; and yet he is the most objective of poets, the most

personal and intolerant of scientists : as poet he proudly acknowledges that his whole poetical work is one long confession ; as scientist, he readily forgets his own warnings against subjective dogmatism. Half Stoic, half Epicurean, so he says, he effects at most a personal one-sided compromise between his two tendencies ; he cannot tolerate asceticism, and if he accepts the Stoic *sustine*, he rejects the *abstine* with which it is linked. He claims to have found peace in Spinozistic renunciation and disinterestedness, and yet the Chancellor Müller must deplore the love passion of an octogenarian who could only regain his lost equilibrium by poetical deliverance, by composing a Marienbad Elegy. Moderation in enjoyment he failed not to preach throughout, even in his early vicious Anacreontica ; but he haughtily rejected the counsels of moderation proffered by the temperate friends whom he dismayed by the madness, the folly, the excesses of his first months at Weimar. Spinozistic joy and calm, moreover, are incompatible with regret and repentance ; and yet he who sought self-deliverance in the artistic objectification of his emotions and ideas, careless of the consequences to his readers, vainly strove not to regret the consequences of his Werther and his Prometheus. He that is wise on Goethian principles attends solely to the present, and Goethe duly sought to avoid recollecting the painful consequences of his Sesenheim idyll-in-action ; but the Goethe who had attained calm and was living his new Olympian life, revisiting Ilmenau, cannot refrain from resuscitating the dead Goethe who, eight years before, had brooded there over the dying embers of the hunting bivouac, regretful of the evil his poetical works had wrought, regretful that

he had not known how to guide his life by art. And yet the Olympian, revisiting the scene of his remorse, should surely rather have abandoned himself in wise passivity to Nature, the oblivion-bringing, the consolatory. Forsooth, Faust wins oblivion and peace by such abandonment.

Doubtless, I am captious and sophistical; "Goethe's course few sons of men may dare to emulate," and least of all may I. Yet had I the power, should I care to emulate Goethe's calm, his eclecticism, his free development by restless, dangerous experimentation on himself and others? As in my youthful days, I should ever gainsay his admirer, and equally gainsay his depreciator. At times, I scorn with Wordsworth, De Quincey, and Novalis his "economic worldliness and artistic atheism"; at others, I scorn them that scorn him. I marvel, yet cannot sympathise with him as with those victims of Melancholy who are my kin. He was not melancholy, indeed, and yet well might he have been, for he attained no real unity. Nay, let me smile, and write grotesquely that if he was not melancholy, he should have been. Did he ever succeed in holding the balance between law and impulse, between knowledge and will, between frank realism and symbolical idealism; or ever succeed in harmoniously fusing the diverse natures inherited from his parents, the vivacious, self-indulgent spontaneity of his mother, prevalent in his youth, and the orderly, self-confident pedantry of his father, prevalent in his age? To the end he was incomplete. He recognised duty only as towards himself. Æsthetically wise, he did not condescend to share the noble errors of common humanity; Schiller, drawn within the circle

of his domination, knew this and continued his own course, and the Romanticists resented the artistic sympathy which allowed him only to assimilate all of Romanticism that was non-Christian, non-Romantic. He felt interest in men and ideas only so far as he discovered in them materials for his own self-development and poetic creation; he was indifferent, with the indifference of pantheism, to all that entered not into "the circle of his activity." Self-analysis he branded as morbid, delighting the while in artistic representation of his own moral maladies; he was never weary of proclaiming the supreme felicity of action, determined after complete self-examination, and yet declared that self-knowledge was impossible, and action dubious, since the morrow alone can reveal if action has proved beneficial or baneful. Can I expect to discover in him an example of unity, harmony, peace, since he confessed that in virtue of his character and habit of mind, the one present idea, the one present enthusiasm, absorbed him, rendered him oblivious of all others? Can I hope for a reconciliation of his Spinozistic doctrine of absolute unity, legitimating fatalistic apathy, with his doctrine of free activity? His own reconciliation is a mere verbal coupling of antithetical words, of pairs of opposites, true appearance, determined autonomy, present eternity, and the like. He divides the world of men into isolated, aristocratic sages, and the dim common herd; into those who possess knowledge and art, and therefore need not religion, and those who, lacking art and knowledge, must possess religion. Sages differ from sages, he allows, in their definition of wisdom and their art of life; but all sages, he is sure, rightly judge it the first law

of wisdom to wave aside unanswered the foolish, insoluble questions which the populace pose to them!

The same, continued: Consistency of thought and action.

Yet Logic and Life, theory and practice, thought and action, should be in accord. But such is the fashion of the world that the ideal is a paradox, and its lovers must endeavour to echo with what confidence they can muster Plato's brave assertion that the ideal is none the worse for being incapable of realisation, must comfort themselves so far as they may with George Herbert's "who aimeth at the sky shoots higher much than he that means a tree." Conformity of creed and life? A Socrates believed knowledge and conduct were one, and his life was the verification of his doctrine. But what do we know accurately of his life and doctrine? No two commentators agree in summarising his creed; no two biographers in the manner of his defence or depreciation. One will discover that, rightly speaking, he had no philosophy at all; another that he was a monger of comfortable, prosaic platitudes, a Greek Paley, a typical Athenian *bourgeois* rendered eccentric by added genius; and so on from the lowest to the highest representation. A Saint Francis was a "prince of youth" among his gay comrades of Assisi, and must separate his days into those before and after his conversion. And what do we accurately know of St. Francis? For, in his legend, he is evidently made to conform as far as may be to the type of his Master. Doctrine and action seem fairly one in Spinoza's case, but whom can I add as fourth to Socrates, St. Francis, and Spinoza?—unless, indeed, it be Thomas Creech, commentator of Lucretius, who

logically committed suicide on the completion of his labours. Pope Celestine the Fifth, Henry the Sixth of England, are admirable in their would-be integrity and consistency of creed and conduct,—but they were set to rule a mad world, and earn the lofty scorn of Dante, the pitying contempt of Shakespeare. Realisation implies deformation, since the material to hand is recalcitrant; history is the record of the sorry accommodations of ideals to earthly conditions. The right is not the possible or the expedient; private and public, private and political morality are not the same. Men of business, men of action, men of the world, find themselves compelled to compromise; ideologues and doctrinaires are reduced to become opportunists; philosophers must draw distinctions between speculative and practical doctrines. Unity of character is of difficult, if not of impossible attainment in periods of transition (and what period is not a period of transition?); the past is reluctantly, never wholly abandoned, the future is vaguely, falsely divined. There are individuals whose actions are better than their creeds, and individuals who fall far short of their own elected standard: Catullus and his like assure us that their lives are purer than their writings; men of genius, and men without genius, arrogate to themselves the right of licence. Temperament, moreover, is complex; and complexity precludes unity. Petrarch is Christian and pagan, mediævalist and humanist; Petrarch the complex and versatile, friend of all his foes, and thereby foe of all his friends, the solitary and the acute man of the world, is wholly incoherent; the least of his inconsistencies is his ideal love of Laura and his contemporaneous lawless love of the mother of

his children. Diderot had a creed, logically deduced from evolutionary, "natural" principles, but he begs his friends not to communicate his exposition, and declares that he would refuse to salute any one suspected of putting his creed into practice. Schopenhauer must carefully warn his disciples not to seek resemblance between his doctrine and his practice; forsooth, his doctrine was one, but he himself was many-sided.

Such is the force of circumstance and the feebleness of human nature that imperative commands from within or from without are regarded as "counsels of perfection." The more ideal the aim, the more excessive the act if act, if action duly conform to aim; but to be excessive is to expose oneself to the well-founded objections of common-sense. The sages, the teachers, must needs offer concessions and facilitate compromises. The Buddha divided the path of salvation into stages; let the disciple pursue it who can, and as far as he can. The Stoics endeavoured to rigidly maintain that virtue, if not perfect, is not virtue at all, that wisdom admits of no degrees; but they had to reckon with human nature, and suitably discovered that there is degree in virtue and wisdom; they could point to no concrete example of the perfect sage; they must confess that all men were *secundæ notæ*. In similar fashion, the Italian Catharists, would-be renewers of the communism and simplicity of the primitive Church, yielded concessions to the weaker brethren. The successors of St. Francis denied themselves of the privilege and duty of obedience to their vows of poverty and Epicurean-like ignorance, that so, by running counter to their master's principles, they might glorify him the

more and establish the better his institution. The Jesuits compromised with human nature so thoroughly that they hastened the reaction signalled by Pascal. Yet, as nature and spirit are antinomies, common-sense compromises must proceed on Jesuitical principles. The schoolboy essayist readily justifies inconsistency of opinion ; Rousseau dwells on the utility of inconsistency between thought and act. Men are so often better than their opinions ; such inconsistency, to Rousseau, is plain testimony of the innate goodness of human nature. The Inquisitioners were logical and inhuman ; La Mettrie was logical and ludicrous with his "O Pleasure, sovereign of gods and men, before whom yield all things, even reason, thou knowest how my heart adores thee, and all the sacrifices it has made thee." To be inconsistent is to be worthy object of satire ; to be consistent is to be wholly angel or beast. Consistency of thought is inconsistent with the necessary development of wisdom in the individual, the race. Knowledge and conduct might possibly coincide, if knowledge were perfect ; perfect wisdom being incompatible with development, conformity of act to thought is precluded. The individual is taught by experience, that is to say, he is only wise when it is too late ; he is ever a tragi-comic hero. The race, we are told, progresses towards wisdom. So far, indeed, nations, like individuals, have progressed towards dotage and decay. But the Hegelian looks on the spectacle undisturbed ; nations and ideas must decline and annihilate themselves that broader syntheses may ensue. But progress, to individuals, nations, the race, ever implies loss side by side with gain. . . . Alas ! I do but "darken counsel." Complexity may be "charming,"

to use Renan's favourite epithet, but the charms of complexity are other than and incompatible with simplicity.

The melancholy of thought: Despair of unity.

I am weary of this storm and stress of thought; weary of analysis and synthesis, weary of criticism of analysis and synthesis; weary of contraries, weary of my despair of reconciling contraries. Nature, indeed, offers nothing but matter for doubt and disquietude; Thought is doubt and disquietude itself. I am weary of wandering hopelessly in the desert of doubt and drought; my strength is almost at an end.

I despairingly desire a synthesis of thought and life. It were reasonable, perchance, to be well content with a personal, subjective synthesis, a synthesis of error which should be truth to me, as being appropriate to my nature, a morality which should promote my vitality. But this also is beyond reach. Is it possible for me to resolve to be blind to opposites, to antinomies? If I listen to my heart, can I refrain from criticising the postulates of my heart, from remembering that sentiment must be checked by intelligence? Truly he who trusts solely to reason must needs doubt, must needs be a sceptic. The doubter, the sceptic, forced on action, must indeed pass over to the Neo-Academicians, and balance probabilities. But to balance probabilities is to doubt once again, is at most to suggest "sceptical solutions as sceptical doubts." He, again, who, distrusting reason, seeks refuge in faith, is in no better case. For faith, to be worthy of the name, must be reasonable, faith must be corrected by reason; and reason, once more, is scepticism.

Spinoza promises unity, an adequate synthesis. He

bases metaphysics on ethics, and ethics on metaphysics ; the two are one. Epicureanism and Stoicism are the two eternally opposite poles of morality in common conceit ; Spinoza offers a synthesis. The Epicurean-Utilitarian principle of self-interest and self-preservation is the principle of Stoic cultivation of the reason and indifference to all that depends not on will. To love self rationally is to love one's true self, to love that which is rational in self. Now, to love the rational is to love God, and God is all that is rational. Therefore to love self is to love others in that they are rational ; and to love the rational in others is to love God. Thus, from a basis of self-love, of self-interest, he reaches altruism, the love of one's neighbours, of the race ; and from altruism he passes to the religious, the philosophical love of God,—that is to say, the eternal moral order in praise of which Cleanthes sang. And, if you are oppressed by the shadow of Necessity, troubled by the painful consciousness of the eternal injustice and immorality of the natural order, he will reveal to you that Stoic freedom, contemplative submission to the natural order, is self-determination, though such self-determination is necessitated. . . . But Kant demolishes once for all Spinozistic and all other dogmatic syntheses. . . . But then, Hegel criticises Kant's criticism, and attains a synthesis. If your faith emboldens you to pursue the quest of unity in diversity, if you care to read Berni after Boiardo, to listen to Handel with or without Mozart's added orchestration, you may let Hegel, the other great modern master of synthesis, remodel and amplify Spinoza's Ode to Divine Harmony. You shall hear the glad tidings that the Good, the True, and the Beautiful

are one; that happiness is virtue, and virtue happiness; that happiness is rational asceticism, and rational asceticism is joy and free expansion; that knowledge and conduct, spirit and nature, philosophy and religion coincide. The way of salvation lies open before you; Hegel repeats, after Spinoza, that the sole rule of morality is to have a clear idea of God; Hegel and Spinoza repeat, after Aristotle, that to live the rational life is to live the divine life. Nay, more than this, he that is in possession of adequate ideas, he that has attained to a perfectly clear idea of God,—and of course the masters and their true disciples have reached this height of beatitude,—is immortal, is a *Gott-Mensch*. . . .

Heine—have I not already written it?—Heine, disciple of Hegel, was delighted to find himself a *Gott-Mensch*. He also found, not to his delight, that he lacked certain very necessary attributes of divinity, that his human element was all too preponderant,—and abdicated. But then Heine was somewhat the slave of "passive affections," of inadequate ideas. He "maintained himself in joy," but his joy was dashed with tears; he "lacked love," as Goethe said, and therefore reason. But Spinoza incarnated Reason; his conduct was wholly rational. Yet was his conduct wholly at one with his creed, his life with his logic, as I allowed myself to allow the other day? The Spinoza of time and space necessarily varied, in that he progressed towards perfection. There is the Spinoza before his moral crisis, his conversion; there is the Spinoza who drew up and practised, like Descartes, provisional rules of morality; there is the Spinoza who is in the possession of perfect knowledge and calm, who, because he adequately comprehends human actions, is not to be

moved to laughter or tears or indignation, and who yet sheds tears at the massacre of Jan de Witt, and has to be restrained by force from sallying forth into the streets to proclaim his scorn. But his doctrine, at least, is one? How can that be, since it is so comprehensive, so admirably eclectic. Moreover, comprehensive as was his synthesis, it was still, of necessity, a personal synthesis; there can be no Spinozist except Spinoza. Follow the devious history of the influences of Spinozism on European thought, witness the conflict of interpretations, the divergences from Spinoza and from one another of those who were under the illusion that they were Spinozists. . . . And have I not already traced the divergences of Hegel's disciples in the interpretation of his synthesis? Hegel sighed, "there is only one disciple who understands me, and he does not understand me." *Se non è vero*— . . . To Spinoza was not given even the sorry comfort of such a sigh. . . . And did he or Hegel understand themselves?

The same, continued: Mysticism.

The "patrons of the One" must needs be *Gott-betrunken*. How should they behold "the One in the Many," Unity in Difference, dream that the world is a dream of divinity, unite themselves to the "Absolute Self-Consciousness," except by mysticism,—which mysticism is ever a confusion of the subjective and objective, a presumption that the seer's dreams are divine realities. Mystically affirm that the Whole is One, and, condescending to reason out your affirmation, you must choose whether you side with the Indian Pantheists and the Eleatics, to whom the One is All because the Many are nothing, or with Heraclitus, Spinoza, Hegel, to whom the Many is the manifestation

of the One. Or you must choose whether you understand All is God in a distributive or collective sense. Understanding it in the collective sense, you yet make God "star and pumpkin, thought and mire, slaying and slain." Mystically affirm, with Aristotle, that the Idea is immanent, with Plato, that it is transcendent, or even that it is transcendent and immanent, and the relations of the One to the Many are equally inexplicable.

Pursue the path of dialectic that leads to Unity, and you shall reach, by successive abstractions, Indifference, Nothingness. Traverse in succession, with the Sufis, the valleys of the Quest, of Love, of Knowledge, of Independence, of Unity, of Amazement, of Self-Annihilation, and you shall but lose yourself in the Divine Essence, gain the peace of Nirvana, of Extinction.

Return in dismay upon your steps, baffled and forlorn, and you do but body forth Indifference under forms of the Good, or Beauty, or Nature, or Thought, or Love,—so many aspects that are irreconcilable, as Plato found to his cost. Spinoza must regard Substance under its two aspects, and thereby sinks incontinently to Dualism, wavers between Idealism and Materialism. Unity is incomprehensible, Difference is fraught with pain. Be reluctant to admit dualism and contrast, desire to believe harmony and unity, and you shall surely fail in your desire. Allow that the human mind is a microcosm mirroring the macrocosm, and the universe shades off into darkness and evil ; the objective world is the manifestation of the spirit, but it is also Nature, which is "the extreme self-alienation of the spirit." Draw an impassable gulf between the subject and the object, suppose that we know that we know nothing of "things in themselves," and the subject, the

conscious phenomenon, must still regard the universe under the laws of subjective thought. Deride, with the scientist or positivist, the attempts of metaphysicians to regard the order of thought as one with the order of external co-existence and succession, to unify Thought and Being, and you are reduced to a dualism of nature and spirit, matter and mind, parallel symbols of an unknown unity. Start with unity, as a metaphysician, trust to the infallibility of reason, and the difference in unity is inexplicable; start with multiplicity, as a scientist, trust to the infallibility of the senses, and the unity in difference is inexplicable. Even suppose it is within our power to apprehend unity by mystical intuition, and to attain peace, we must speedily descend to the world of pain and evil,—not the less painful and evil, if pain and evil are but negative aspects,—in which being is manifested in difference; must descend and be baffled by the antagonism of opposites.

The same, continued: knowledge of Self and Nature.

Lucretius and Schelling told us that to know Nature was to know Self, Socrates and Fichte that to know Self was to know Nature. If we know ourselves, we know that we are the sons and yet the enemies of Nature, we know that we desire justice while Nature is supremely indifferent to justice, we are like to protest against the actual, to side with faith against science. If we know Nature, we know that man in his war against Nature is ever baffled, that the law of irony is supreme over the individual and the race, that each and all have contrary tendencies and make illogical, ineffectual compromises between the ideal and the real, between the moral and the natural. We may hold that the moral is also the natural, that the ideal, if rational,

is also the real; but this is only to say that man is a microcosm, that Nature writ small or large is the dolorous battle-ground of antinomies. Saints and sages have their dreams of felicity; they aspire to live in the eternal, to know truth adequately. But what is truth? what is the eternal? To know the whole truth about "a flower in the crannied wall" is to know "all in all," is to know not only the because but also the why, is to have transcended self, to have identified self with the eternal order of Nature, is to be subject-object, is to be God. We creatures of a day with bounded minds surrender ourselves to contemplation, seek like Buddhist seers to lose ourselves in the eternal; we dream that, clear-eyed, we pierce the mists of illusions and behold the truth of things, we dream that we behold—Indifference, Non-Being. To live in the eternal order is to be dead in life, is to behold Indifference and become indifferent. He that lives in the eternal order dreams that he and all things are a dream. He is supremely cultured; and to be cultured is to be tolerant, indifferent. He is a lonely, mournful Stoic who retires within himself that he may live in the eternal and wearily discovers that his soul is empty. He loves truth; but truth is antinomical, truth is error, and error is truth. He would fain act rationally; but action is irrational, action is based on desire, and desires are illusions. He has contemplated the universal, transcended illusion, and is therefore dead in life, immobile, incapable of action, since to act is to be a dupe of Nature.

The same, continued: Amiel.

If I turn to Amiel, I am but confirmed in the truth of what I wrote yesterday, in the truth of these last de-

spairing pages. . . . And yet it would be no difficult task to maintain that Amiel, latest of the articulate sons of Melancholy, was the happiest of them. At the least, it is sure that he was well equipped with the conditions, with the means of happiness. Unlike Leopardi and Maurice de Guérin, he is blessed with an inherited competency, sufficient to allow of independence, to preserve him from the humiliation and slavery of poverty, sufficient to serve as a platform from whence to reach firm ground, to win a tolerable station beneath the sun ; and this competency, moreover, he increases threefold before his death, and yet is generous and helpful. It is given him in boyhood to pass his days near the lake and mountains which inspired Rousseau to become the first of modern landscapists ; in youth to fulfil his *Wanderjahre*, to wander forth seven years, behold cities and men and scenery, traverse Switzerland and Italy and Sicily, visit Paris, "city of light," live an ardent student life at Heidelberg and Berlin, vibrate responsively to whatsoever is fair and noble, know the height and depth and breadth of all the joys of sages and saints, artists and scientists. On his return he is welcomed, acclaimed, chosen to be the guide of those that are but little younger than himself along the paths of loveliness and wisdom. Versatile, he loves society and yet solitude, solitude and yet society, is enabled to alternate delight at will, is in the way of being preserved by his mobility and personal charm from the hapless, hopeless seclusion of Leopardi and Obermann and their despairing, incomplete, one-sided vision of truth. If he wearies of exercising fascination over men and women, if he wearies of social pleasures, he can retire within himself, can look in his heart and write, can analyse the folly of

social men, can find relief, consolation, in introspection, in contemplative mysticism. Haunted by the ideal of perfection, of completeness, he betrays not the ideal of love by possession, like Shelley; dutiful, he is not like to be horror-stricken, paralysed by the vision of the "Spectre of Debauch," like Alfred de Musset; and though he fails to win fame in life, to satisfy the high expectations of his friends, he escapes thereby the demoralisation of success, and moreover is pursuing the while his appropriate business, since he is inditing the all-sufficient "testament of his thought and heart," is confessing the multitudinous diversity of his temperament, is noting exactly his ideas, sentiments, sensations. And if his genius is malady, if his "testament" is one of deepest melancholy, this testament is but a thirtieth part of the private diary of one whose nature was mobile, inclined, so say his friends, to joy rather than to sadness, a series of extracts admirably selected by his editors in the interests of his fame, extracts serving to prove his genius for the expression of melancholy.

And yet Amiel is among the chiefest of the sons of Melancholy; he is no more to be consoled than they. He knows with Leopardi that hope lasts only while youth lasts, with Alfred de Vigny that the hopes of manhood are cowardice. Like Lenau, he has feared to betray ideal love, to compromise present and future liberty, to give hostages to fortune and responsibility; and, like Lenau, he is for ever regretting his allegiance to the ideal, for ever dreaming that love of an actual woman, relatively perfect, would prove his salvation, would be supremest consolation. He is able to duly accomplish toil, and after toil accomplished to sojourn at leisure amid fairest nature; but if he admires, he

also distrusts and fears this living nature, distrusts even more than Lenau,—for is not Nature an eternal illusion, and they who love her the dupes of their love? He can look upon her with an artist's eye, but he cannot refrain from looking on her coldly, intellectually, sceptically. The enthusiasm of nature is like the enthusiasm of hope, is at most a passing mood when youth is gone. Moreover, not only is Amiel the thrall of nature's influence, subdued to the hour and the season, like Maine de Biran and Maurice de Guérin, but still more haplessly he is at times most tranquil when nature is mourning, his joy in the spring-tide passes into pain; like Leopardi, he is young with the youth of the year, but vain, youthful desires awaken, old wounds reopen, love is longed for, love and therefore death. Sociable, judging that he is best fitted for social life, he cannot but scorn the parrot-gossip which alone is possible in society, cannot but find that to converse or to be silent is inevitably in either case to incur adverse criticism; driven back on solitude, like Leopardi and Maurice de Guérin, he fails not to admire in absence that social intercourse of which present experience breeds weariness, dislike, disgust, fails not also to discover that solitude is wretchedness, is dolorous, empty selfishness. To be in solitude is to have at command his perennial consolation of diary-confession and ingenious versification; but though, to a Goethe, poetry is deliverance, and the analytical confession of melancholy is dispersion of brooding mists, is purgation of poison, to a Maurice de Guérin, to an Amiel such therapeutic remedies serve but to waken, to vivify, to aggravate distress, to deepen the painful sense of powerlessness.

It was easier for Amiel to traverse the gamut of

existence, to be all things and all men in turn—though he rather tells us of his power of universal metamorphosis than gives us proofs, such as a Michelet can in a measure give, of this power,—to wing his mystic way to that central calm of Indifference which is potentially the universe, than to be himself, easier in a word to contemplate than to act. But contemplation is self-consciousness ; subjectivity is the condition of objectivity ; it is only by the commission of what Indian sages term "the heresy of individuality," by existing as a person, that contemplation is possible. Amiel is a contemplatist, but he and all other contemplatists can but contemplate a world of their own creation, can only render an account of their vision of things, can only contemplate themselves. Individuality, Being, is limitation, imperfection ; whatsoever opposites are implicit in Being, are implicit in Individuality ; self-consciousness is consciousness of imperfection and opposition ; consciousness is pain, is melancholy. In proportion as the individual is capable of general comprehension, comprehension by intellectual sympathy of the manifold forms of existence, he is but analysing himself ; the more versatile and multiple is this self, the more irreconcilable pairs of opposites does the self-analyst discover within himself, and the more poignant and irremediable will be his melancholy. Moreover, the melancholy self-analyst will discover that even consciousness of equilibrium can be no more than the fitful illusion of a passing mood, that his nature is inevitably biassed, that he regrets, resents this bias, be its direction whatever it may, that he painfully desires to be the opposite of that which he tends to be. The practical man, the man of action,

as Horace knew and told us once for all, is never content with his actual lot; the contemplatist, like Amiel, comes to scorn contemplation. Amiel comes to yearn for action, to yearn for that brutal self-confidence and gross self-satisfaction which action presupposes, though he cannot but scorn such qualities, cannot but shrink from compromising his liberty, from incurring responsibility, cannot but fear the irreparable consequences of any and every action. Moreover, the idealist, the contemplatist, scornful of the real, must of necessity scorn himself, since he scorns the finite: Amiel cannot surrender himself to love, because he cannot fail to perceive defect in any and every object of love, be this object a particular person or a particular idea, since the particular is necessarily the imperfect; and yet he would fain devote himself to some fair hope, or idea, or woman, or action in deeds or words, would fain be ambitious, though he is weaned from ambition because his ambition is ideal, infinite. And the idealist, the contemplatist, must make sorry compromises, and sorrow at his compromises: Amiel, though he fears and scorns practical action, yet acts and must act as a friend, a professor, a citizen, conscious the while that his action is a mean translation of the ideal; diffidently, painfully composes, must compose, works of literary virtuosity, elaborates verse-translations of foreign poems, of his own private journal, conscious the while that his literary activity is a mean translation of the ideal.

Any and every attitude of thought or action is exposed to criticism, to blame, because it is particular, and therefore incomplete; no man may so think or act as not to incur criticism, blame. The lucid self-

examiner, though his instinct of self-preservation will lead him at times to deceive himself in his own interest, to regard his malady as a privilege, a superiority, to pride himself on his weakness,—as Amiel occasionally does,—will discover and apply to himself all the charges that other men, they also imperfect and blamable, since they are individuals, are like to bring against him. The self-satisfied man of action who should scorn or pity Amiel and his kindred should remember that these have amply scorned themselves, should also remember that he and his like would have been objects of pity to the melancholy men of contemplation. Contemplation and action are opposed; he may act whose emotions and thoughts run ceaselessly in a single, narrow, bounded channel; and he who is not simple, whose range of emotions and thoughts is wide, is paralysed. But the one fares little or no better than the other; the man of action and the man of contemplation are alike biassed by a fatality of temperament; each is what he becomes, and becomes what he is. And consciousness of being, becoming, mutability, is conscious misery.

Weariness of Thought.

I am weary, weary of thought; weary of Difference, weary of Unity. The Architectonic science is ever an ideal, a science without a content. We think and are, but know not what are Thought and Being, or how related. We are dimly conscious there is unity, though "sorrow's eye, glazed with blinding tears, divides one thing entire to many objects." We seem to know all things in a dream, as Plato says, but find we know nothing when we awake. Awaking, the mind converses with itself, but such conversation

involves the use of words, and words are distinctions, and to distinguish is to abandon unity. Language is the brother-enemy of Thought. For perfect knowledge, a Metaphysic of Metaphysics, and a Criticism, destructive and constructive, of such a Metaphysic of Metaphysics, were needed; in default of this, the historical criticism of any and every term of metaphysics, theology, science, ethics, politics, suffices to inspire distrust of any and every system-builder. The thirst for knowledge is a tragic passion; Marlowe's hapless Dr. Faustus is a victim of a vain, soul-consuming lust even as Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Barabas, and Queen Dido.

Did I not write long ago in these pages that there was nothing worth the knowing but that which is unknown, unknowable? When I return to my prison life, when my days of "golden uncontrolled enfranchisement" are at an end, there is nothing left me, it would seem, but as heretofore to pitifully amuse the leisure of my lonely nights by intellectual curiosity, and to "drudge for my outer covering," daily acting over again the sorry acts for which society rewards me scantily, worthily. For a year I have abandoned action, such action as was permitted me, and Epicurean contemplation, that I might earnestly, truly contemplate, and therefore earnestly, truly act—if contemplation be the rightful source of practical action, be highest action. And contemplation would seem to convince me of the vanity of all action, and all contemplation. . . . Let me enjoy my present liberty, if I have the heart to enjoy it; let me cease to think, if indeed I can cease; let me surrender myself to the influence of these days of sunshine that remain

to me. Soon, all too soon, a few short months that yet remain of my year of liberty, and I must return to my old poverty and isolation; return to my prison, more chill, more gloomy than in the past, since now all hope is fled. Unable to comfort myself, I may not seek to comfort others. Such consolation as gold and interest afford I may not offer, for I am not of the world, and cannot, even if I would, win the world's approbations and rewards. Action, on any but the meanest scale, is not permitted me. Moreover, thought reveals the vanity of all action, be it mean or grandiose. Still more, and worse, thought reveals the vanity of thought, since thought cannot reconcile opposing thoughts. "For no thought is contented," agree Shakespeare and Richard the Second, "the better sort, as thoughts of things divine, are intermix'd with scruples, and do set the word itself against the word: as thus, 'Come little ones'; and then again, 'It is as hard to come as for a camel to thread the postern of a needle's eye.'"

The remedy of specialisation.

But before I cast this book aside, as long ago I cast my "Golden Book," should I not finally, by way of balancing opposites, ask myself whether it is not wisdom to abandon all hope of equilibrium, to cultivate one special faculty rather than to pursue a vain quest after harmony, after equilibrium? Harmony is chimerical; equilibrium is apathy, stagnation. He is wise who is successful, judges the son of Sirach; and success presupposes specialisation. To be narrow, one-sided, is to be in the way of action; the versatile should cultivate preponderantly the one faculty which best repays cultivation. To be simple and single of eye,

to be one definitely, to be the slave of one idea, to possess an exclusive talent—this, possibly, should be the object of my desire. . . . But I am haplessly complex, cursed with a multiplicity of "half-talents," or rather potential half-talents, or—impotent potentialities. Voluntary elimination, choice, habitual exercise of the chosen talent, would hardly avail me. From youth there has reigned within me a dolorous struggle for survival; no fittest tendency has survived at the cost of the rest; the strife continues without hope of issue. Kindly is the fatality of temperament when the temperament is simple; but what of the temperament that is complex? Each tendency is counteracted by the other co-existing tendencies, and strife is fatally endless. Nor, indeed, have I any reason to suppose that a single tendency, surviving, or exclusively cultivated, would be strengthened by the atrophy of the rest; the "noble," "natural" savage fondly deems that the strength of his slain foes passes into himself. Blessed, or cursed, with a sufficiency of worldly goods, I should be at most a trifling dilettante. Could I even from dilettante turn creator, and thus beguile my melancholy, it were vain to suppose that the voice of my heart would be wholly stifled, that voice which now I hear incessantly, and which I should still hear in hours of lassitude, more imperious perchance for momentary suppression. . . . "But whate'er I be, nor I nor any man that but man is with nothing shall be pleased, till he be eased with being nothing." Long ago I cited this of Shakespeare's King Richard the Second. Richard's Bushey and Richard himself were my spokesmen yesterday; and now Richard's Queen shall summarise my sorrow, shall justify my despairing

silence. Of a truth, "what I have"—so little, and so mean—"I need not to repeat, and what I want it boots not to complain." I must make shift to love again, as I was wont to love, as Maurice de Guérin loved, that god of silence, Harpocrates, with finger laid on lip. This much, however, I have gained in my quest: I can no longer desire opportunity for action, which is ever fraught with mingled consequences,—successful action, which is ever at the cost of others; I can no longer desire opportunity for contemplation, which tends to doubt and despair. . . . Be it mine to cultivate uncomplaining patience, brave endurance, humble dignity. . . . But have I not linked two opposites in these my latest words?

Reaction against despair.

Once more, and I have done. And, assuredly, "'twere well it were done quickly," for when I turn over these pages, when I look upon my self-portraiture, I could fain disown acquaintance with myself. Let me suppose them indited by another, imprinted, exposed to my curiosity and judgment. Should I not be prompted to bid their author cease descanting on his own deformity? Should I not instinctively abhor his diseased self-questionings, his impotent despair, his coward selfishness? Should I not doubt the legitimacy of his doubts, and protest against his protests? And yet, would this instinctive reaction be a permanent one? The confessors of Melancholy have awakened reaction and protest again and again in me; but none the less, I know them for my brethren, my articulate brethren, and sympathise unspeakably with their sorrows, since they are akin to mine. . . . The plaints of those who are stricken at heart are lost in the tumult;

the multitude, rightly it may be, stay not to listen, anxious, it would seem, not to be reminded of misery. Yet from time to time I have chanced to see the imprinted confessions of my articulate brethren lying on those open-air stalls which assemble books that have been owned and read ; on turning their leaves to learn what passages have elicited sympathy and earned a pencil's underscore, I have almost ever found these passages express some fleeting mood of timid joy or tearful hope. Was it that the readers, stirred even as I to reaction and protest by the very completeness of the despondency presented in spectacle to them, eagerly seized upon the slightest pretext for optimism offered by the author's inconsistency,—necessary inconsistency, for opposite calls for opposite, sorrow and despair presuppose at least desires of joy and hope,—endeavouring to maintain themselves in error, striving to cling to the illusive belief in the possibility of happiness ? . . . Be this as it may, the spectacle of a too complete despondency surely awakens opposition within me, even as the spectacle of a confidence too complete. Opposite calls for opposite ; pessimism and optimism have no meaning apart from each other. Yet how are these, or any other pair of opposites, to be reconciled ? How may extremes be avoided ? By the discovery and constant, consistent practice of the mean between them ? But, once again, the mean is ever an ideal, ever just beyond the grasp, ever passing out of sight. Were the mean not an ideal, the attempts to discover it, to reconcile opposites, to reveal the harmony of opposites, would not have to be perpetually, vainly renewed. . . . I could conceive a certain satisfaction of pride in thinking and acting counter to my nature. Inclined, it would seem,

by temperament, impelled by circumstance, to the side of pessimism, I might possibly approximate to the desired mean by a wilful, blind, persistent partisanship of optimism. But how would such an escape from the fatality of temperament, original and accentuated by my outward fortunes, be possible? In like manner, to avoid the excess of self-consciousness, to approximate to the mean between egoism and altruism, I should violently espouse altruism, self-sacrifice. But given my frame of mind, my circumstances, to what idea, to whom could I satisfactorily devote myself, and die that I might live? . . . Nay, I am but reopening the old unsolved, insoluble problems. . . .[1]

[1] Here follow several blank pages in the manuscript. I have again taken on myself to mark this blank, and the interval of time which elapsed between this entry and the next, by another division of the diary.—EDITOR.]

PART III

A visitation of peace.

Ach, ich war *des Treibens müde.* Not a word have I written during these days of perfect summer; and barely a thought has troubled my calm. I have been making true holiday. I have lived in the present, as it has rarely been given me to do,—given at most in those short breathing-spaces I could yearly snatch from toil, those halcyon days I could spend by the sea. But, even then, the shadows were wont to deepen in upon me; forsooth, I must needs squander my slender store of sunny hours in fondly essaying to express my subjective melancholy,—gentle, subdued though it was. But now, but in these latest days, I have wholly surrendered myself, wisely passive, to the influence of Nature, have gazed on her beauty, void of will, void of passion, void of mad desire to express her charm, to interpret her. I have waved aside all doubts and questionings, have ceased, as Jami, the Persian mystic, ceased, to be the slave of every "how" and "wherefore." Void of will? Nay, rather I have willed to be happy in my holiday, like Pippa. But Pippa gazed on the puppet-show of human passions, losing herself for the moment in the contemplation of the lives of others, and then passing, gaily phrasing her content to be herself and not another. Pippa might do this, but

not I. And yet at least I have raised my voice in the solitude, carolling brave songs to exorcise the spirit of distrust. But I have been Faust, not Pippa, Faust who has turned aside from the village festival to climb the hill-brow, there to rest in the joyous sunlight. "Happy is he who still dares to hope that he will rise above the sea of error. That which we know not is that which we need to know, and that we know is all unprofitable." So he speaks, remembering past vanities, and turns for relief to the contemplation of the loveliness around, fearing to mar with melancholy the sweetness of the hour, hoping to forget that which he knows.

. . . Is it that my calm is merely due to bodily sanity? I have willed *not* to think in these perfect days, I have wandered afield, and returned at nightfall only to sink into deepest slumber. Is health, is happiness conditional on vagueness of thought, on vacancy of mind? . . . But the sun soon sank on Faust's festal day; he must brood again on mystery, and listen to the spirit of denial within him. Winter treads hard on the heels of summer, as pain follows joy. "The summer of life so easy to spend. . . . But winter hastens at summer's end," sings Pippa. Soon I must return to my life of perennial winter. Has the sunshine of these happy days brought me a gospel? Have the halcyon hours been harbingers of a "new life"?

> Ach, ich bin des Treibens müde,
> Was soll all der Schmerz und Lust?
> Süsser Friede,
> Komm, ach komm in meine Brust!

Peace has come and sojourns with me, weary as I was

and am of endless fluctuation and ever-varied distress. Will she wed me, and be my helpmeet to the end? Would that it might be so!

The "new life."

So much I wrote a while ago, to furnish myself with an excuse for not thinking, for not-writing. It was, and is, peace with me, a peace of that order which Maurice de Guérin knew in those days of his at the Val d'Arguenon which intervened between his baffled quest for philosophic truth and his dolorous endeavour to accommodate himself to a practical life. Alas! his days of peaceful, passionless contemplation of outer Nature were too fair to last; and I, even as he, must take up the burden of active life, and drudge for food and shelter,—drudge without Ferdinand's hope of winning, by drudgery, an ideal Miranda. Summer is dying, and winter is at hand. In the sullen or stormy days of the period of liberty that yet remains to me before I quit my solitude I must lay the foundations of the lowly shrine of my "new life," in which Peace is to dwell. I must mark off its boundaries, trace the lines of the edifice, draw out my code of service and book of hours. . . . A personal synthesis only? . . . Be it so.

His method of happiness.

This happiness, then, which is the aim of human action and contemplation, what form shall it take for me? . . . Am I not convinced, and have I not a cloud of witnesses equally convinced, that the only possible happiness is that which one thinks to give to others, that self-sacrifice is sole happiness. Positive moralists, considering that a happiness within the bounds of experience can alone be considered, and

finding, on consideration, that personal happiness is chimerical, think to console themselves by holding that it is a sufficient, ample happiness to contribute, as Bacon puts it, to "the relief of man's estate." But this is only to adjourn the question, which again recurs in its old form after adjournment. As questions of social morality are merely questions of personal morality, so questions of social happiness are merely questions of personal happiness. If my self-sacrifice goes to the making of the general happiness, the general self-sacrifice of humanity, past and present, must likewise go to the making of my own happiness. But how can I be happy so long as I am conscious of the misery of others. Self-sacrifice is progress towards perfection,—but progress along the path of perfection is progress along the path of selfishness. . . . What then must be my selfish happiness?

From the circumstances of my case, my penury and consequent solitude, I cannot hope to give happiness to others,—that happiness which is only theirs so long as they can believe it theirs. From the circumstances of my case, again, my self-sacrifice can only take the form of refraining from ill-doing. But such self-sacrifice comes so easy to me that it deserves not so noble a name. Self-indulgence at the cost of others, vice in its most elegant shapes, have no charm for me. Ill conduct is ugly, and therefore repugnant, hateful. But such as it is, this self-sacrifice is the only, all too modest, merely negative contribution I can make to "the relief of man's estate." Yet be it so. If "they also serve who only stand and wait," they also serve who hinder not the service.

A Maudsley, versed, like Ribot, in the maladies of the will, discerns in the well-fashioned will the last and highest phase of mental development. A Pascal judges that the design of God is rather to perfect the will than the reason: "Now, perfect clearness would only serve the intellect, and would prove detrimental to the will." I know only too well the constant ebb and flow, like to that of the Euripus, of contrary impulses, the discord that results from openness of mind. The desire to transcend the prejudices of temperament, the desire to comprehend all that is human, the desire to place self, perfected, developed, to the full extent of its capacities, in accord with nature, or, if nature be immoral or a-moral, at least with the moral order, with God—these are noble desires, but shipwreck lies this way. I must hold that liberty is voluntary limitation, obedience, and cavil no longer at antinomies. I must hold with Goethe that self-development is the assimilation of such extraneous elements, and those alone, which are congruous, therefore not prejudicial, to native aptitudes—be they mean as mine are, or be they excellent. Concentration, stability, prejudice—for prejudices make for sanity,—these must I desire. But Goethe counselled that we should "live resolutely in the True, the Beautiful, the Whole." The True?—Pilate might well have asked what is Truth, sorrowfully, despairingly, without a jest. And the Whole?—Precisely because it is the Whole, it embraces all the realm of Typhon, of Ahriman, of Evil. . . . I must abandon the True and the Whole, and adhere solely to the Beautiful.

Power of will.

But Will? But Liberty? Are not will and liberty mere psychological illusions? As religion is

reduced to morality, and morality, conscience, disappears before analysis, as personality is dissolved into a mere echo, a reflection, of the variations of the body, so will is lost in determinism, automatonism. *Velle non discitur.* The sources of the illusion are set forth by the physiologist ; and the moralist, basing on the conclusions of the physiologist, bids us forsooth modify our character, forgetting to add—if we have the power, which power is precisely denied. Yet, let Will be an illusion. If Will be but the victory of one passion over another, as Spinoza says, yet this illusion of choice is none the less a necessary illusion. On the lowest ground will has helped humanity to bear its burdens. It is a fair illusion, this belief in man's power to strain towards perfection.

Yet, have I power of will? René had strength of will, and disdained to use it ; Obermann and Amiel, each in his own way, were painfully conscious of their incapacity of will. Maine de Biran, would-be Stoic, defining Stoicism as the affirmation of the supremacy of will, must confess, like Obermann, after sincerest self-examination, that he is wholly unable to command his actions, and still less his sentiments ; must lament that he is wholly at the mercy of his organisation. The Russian novelists allow, at most, power of will to their heroines ; their feeble, unstable heroes drift to and fro on every wave of doctrine ; abstain from action, because they can no other ; act, when it is given them to act, all too logically, all too simply, madly—even as the iron-willed heroines act—under the magnetic influence of fanatics, or under the insane impulse of Otchaïanie, "possession," as Dostoievsky appropriately terms it. Fever succeeds to apathy ; they are strong

to will only when reason, lucidity, no longer gives pause to the will. They fling themselves on action, on crime, if but to end irresolution, if but to court death and peace. But, though I accept solitude and obscurity, and will strive even to cherish them ; though I definitely abandon action for contemplation, since action is not allowed me, since I should fear the consequences of action, the inevitable concomitancy of evil in the results of good action, were action allowed me ; I am not conscious of a lack of will-power. In time past I willed strenuously to acquire knowledge, I willed faithful performance of daily duty. And I must henceforth will concentration of my faculties, such—always understood—as they are ; must concentrate them on duty, the duty of joy.

Dante punishes,—yes, I will add—rightly punishes those who bore themselves sadly in the sweet air made joyous by the sunshine, who veiled all things with the acrid vapour of their hearts. The sun does not always smile, but my heart shall. I will rank with those wisest of sectaries, *οἱ ἐλπωτικοί*, The Hopeful, to whom Plutarch alludes in passing. I will be *hilaris et convenienter gratiosus*, as the rule of St. Francis enjoined. Joy is the symptom of strength, Spinoza allows that the knowledge of the good is a synonym of reason, and I will understand reason only as the conscious "passion of joy," will "possess my heart in joy." L'Allegra and La Pensierosa are twin sisters, indeed ; but, then, a lover must choose between them, he cannot wed both. Come, then, Allegra, whose other name is Duty. I will forget thy sister, loving only thee. . . .

It is a metaphor only, this making of life a poem,—"a true poem, a composition, a pattern of the best and

honourablest things," as was written of Sir Philip Sidney. But, since my temperament is that of the artist, I will make my life a poem, a picture,—that none will hear, or see. But what of that? . . . The artist is only artist if he chooses, eliminates. Melancholy shall be eliminated, that my poem-picture, my life, may be fair. The true artist ignores all that is ugliness; he cannot, will not see it. He ignores. Dutiful, I will ignore pain and sorrow, will recognise alone the obligation to be happy. Hitherto, I have followed Marcus Aurelius's rule: "let thy mien be cheerful." Henceforth, not mien alone, but heart shall be cheerful. Life is duty, and the accomplishment of daily duty is not intolerable. To be happy is the fairest duty, and the fairest courage. Courage is grave, indeed; but he that is courageously happy is joyfully grave.

Optimism and pessimism.

Was I not all too enthusiastic yesterday? Will not joy yield to melancholy, enthusiasm to criticism? But I am resolved to be optimistic, to be joyful. Why not find material for grave, temperate joy even in antinomies? To presume that I have accomplished a synthesis would be the best of proofs that I have attained stability of contemplation, and calm. Syntheses are arbitrary, personal, subjective, but thereby precisely significant of character; and character is significant of the strong will which I have willed to form, and possess. If I can find joy in the antinomies of optimism and pessimism, I furnish myself with an excellent test that I am recognising the duty of joy.

Well, then, Optimism and Pessimism are a pair of the countless opposites which are the extreme poles between which human thought moves, and must move.

Both views result from a balancing of pains and pleasures; and since contentment and melancholy are matters of individual organisation, men incline to the one or the other according to their prevailing temperament. Shaftesbury is naturally an optimist, Butler is naturally a pessimist. The rational optimist, that is to say, he who has theorised his temperament, may find a balance of pleasure in this life, or may be a pessimist as regards the life of experience, postulating the redress of the balance by another existence, striving meanwhile to find pleasure in duty. The pessimist, on the other hand, may also be an optimist in a degree; holding that pleasure is brief, he may still hold that brevity is of the essence of pleasure; convinced that all is vanity, he may yet be convinced that many vanities are delightful. . . . But I am still balancing opposites. Mankind is apt both to joy and sorrow, is optimistic and pessimistic by turns. The sane, optimistic poet wins popular suffrage; but, also, *sunt lacrimæ rerum*, and Plato must complain that poets are crowned whose "words and melodies are most sorrowful to hear." But I must essay my synthesis. I will be bold, then, and affirm that both pessimists and optimists are idealists. I will be yet bolder, and affirm that of these idealists, if the optimist generously extends his satisfaction with his best, ideal self to a satisfaction with the actual frame of things, the pessimist is more optimistic than the optimist. For while the one is content with things as they are, the other would only be contented if things were far otherwise, or even wholly otherwise. While the optimist sees in this world the best of all possible worlds, the pessimist demands, in the name of the ideal, a much better than this best. . . . There! Have I

not succeeded in smiling? But, unfortunately for my synthesis, pessimists persist in remaining incredulous that the ideal is capable of realisation.

But my own, personal synthesis? I will look on Pessimism and Optimism as extremes, as one-sided exaggerations. I will assimilate so much of Spinoza as will serve to augment my joy, to further me in the way of my "greater perfection"; I will hold that, *à priori*, life is neither good nor evil, is precisely that which we make it. As an artist, an artisan of my own happiness, I will ignore all save the beautiful,—which beautiful includes pity, sympathy, noble discontent.

The remedy of voluntary limitation.

But this voluntary limitation, this exclusion of melancholy, is much as if a Jacobi, weary of the eternal duel between his heart and head, his sensibility and his intelligence, were to impose silence on the doubts and questionings of his intellect, that his heart may be at rest. Is it a mere abdication of a weak and mediocre mind, a cowardly acceptance of defeat? "The effect of a great multiplicity of ideas," says Vauvenargues, "is to involve weak minds in contradictions." But the ideal of "the greatest weaklings," says Novalis, is precisely "the ideal of highest strength, of most powerful life," which was the exclusive ideal of Vauvenargues. And I have already stated a few out of the countless contradictions in which Goethe involved himself. . . . Well, Goethe, he who is not content with any single point of view, who endeavours to regard nature objectively, impersonally, confesses that his calm is attained by strenuous elimination of doubts, by constant refusals to admit or consider contradictions. Moreover, I have no pride to wound by any admission

that I am of the order of "weak minds." And Vauvenargues himself is only able to arrange tentative prolegomena to a system by the most arbitrary exclusions.

His ideal mood.

The temple once erected, I must grave brief legends around the portal. What shall they be? The men of letters must have been embarrassed when it was asked of them the other year to signify their dearest texts and tirades. For what rhythmical period does not weary by often remembrance? The fairest collocations of words are prisons to thought; the expression is nothing to that which it fain would express; Isis is never wholly unveiled. My task is easier. What, then, can I remember at the moment? . . .

Cato's "I regret not having lived, since I have so lived that I deem I was not born in vain."

Pascal's "Thou wouldst not seek me, hadst thou not already found me; therefore, trouble not thyself."

Sophocles's choral strophe—and let it be in Matthew Arnold's English: "Oh! that my lot may lead me in the path of holy innocence of word and deed, that path which august laws ordain, laws that in the highest empyrean had their birth, of which heaven is the father alone, neither did the race of mortal men beget them, nor shall oblivion ever put them to sleep. The power of God is mighty in them, and groweth not old."

Plato's "The true philosopher . . . is content, if only he may live his earthly life pure of injustice and unrighteousness, and quit the present scene in peace and kindliness with bright hopes."

Pindar's "It is our duty to harbour goodly hope."

And again Pindar's "Brief is the flowering time of

the joy of mortals. And quickly the blossom falls, smitten by adverse change. We are the creatures of a day, anything and nothing, the shadow of a dream. But when the splendour comes that Heaven bestows, our meed is radiant light and sweetest life."

And let me end with St. Paul's eulogy of charity.

Pindar-fashion, I was to begin my palace-building by making the portal radiant. I have given brief rein to memory, and now must notice that I have remembered sentences of moral beauty alone. . . . And yet I trusted instinct rightly, for, if I am to make fair my life, moral beauty must be paramount. Sensitiveness to colour and form in music, art, and literature will not greatly further me. It is not mine to dwell in the Fortunate Isles; and lotus-eating, even for the leisured, cannot be more than an occasional diet.

A surprise of happiness.

I have been accustomed to regard the surprises of happiness as part of the stock-in-trade of poets and novelists. And yet that has happened this autumn day which was unforeseen, which lent lustre even to the sunshine. Mindful of the first pages of this diary, I had dared to be absurd. I had risen so gladsome, that the romantic seemed as natural as—the singing of the birds amid the orchard-trees on which I looked from my window. This day would I be Orpheus, would prelude in the woods as though the golden-snooded Muses were to take up the strain when I had ended, singing as once they sang at the wedding-feast of Cadmus and Harmonia. But how convey my lyre,—such lyre as Raphael's Apollo loves,—to the secret glades? I thought how I had often borne a hidden nosegay through the stony homeward streets—so timid

are we children of industrialism, fearing to encounter ridicule by open love of beauty. Veiling then my four-stringed lyre in cloak of darkness—let this serve as laughing paraphrase for waterproof and violin,—I stole away with guilty trepidation. Unmarked I reached my woodland brook and knoll of moss, choosing for audience and rivals winged choristers, not sheep. As my fingers wandered over the strings, I smiled in thought of the phantom maiden, Nephele, whom I was wont in time past childishly to invoke by mournful rhythms. And, to mock melancholy, I modulated swiftly into a joyous allegro. Leaning against a white-rinded birch, I glanced from rippling brook to leafy, sun-spangled covert, and the sombre shade that was scored by mounting, columnar stems. . . . Was that a Dryad peeping with curious eyes through a leafy screen, parting the twigs with gentle hand? Was it Nephele? . . . I played on, fearing to dispel the vision, feigning to fix my eyes upon the strings. . . . Would she linger, and thus approve my minstrelsy; or swiftly disappear in scorn from mortal eyes? I echoed Faust's "Oh stay, thou fleeting moment." . . . How many moments of prosaic time the Dryad lingered I know not; but I had ample leisure to mark well her beauty. And alas! it passed not undiscovered that I was conscious of her presence. A meeting of the eyes,—and needs must I pause in my playing. . . . The leaves rustled to their wonted place, and I must hear hurried parting steps. . . . No Dryad surely, prisoned to her natal tree. Some daughter of Eve, not all without a taint of transmitted curiosity. Rather, some guest of a neighbouring country house, not lightly fatigued by lengthy walks, and not afraid of sylvan solitude. . . . Well, surprised

by happiness, filled with joy and music, I could sing on my homeward way, my lyre well veiled, my newest, dearest picture treasured sacredly in memory.

The remedy of love.

If it was dangerous to speak disdainfully of Helen, as Stesichorus must find, far graver was the offence and all condign the punishment of austere Hippolytus, self-dedicated victim of the wrath of Aphrodite. Love, thou art mediator between Truth and the human understanding, though I have ever mistrusted thee! Vouchsafe thy pardon, and I will stoutly hold the lists in thy behalf against all comers, with a "Perfect lovers are onely wise" for challenge.

"Fair lady is never false," "Perfect lovers are onely wise"! John Forde was youthful, verily, when he made bold to defend his defiant, chivalrous "positions." Yet Beauty is Truth's splendour and lovely incarnation. I will not herd with heretics who fondly babble of beauty unadorned. Beauty unadorned is formless Good; and formless good is arid dialectic. The Banquet, not the Philebus, shall charm me. "Love is the onely line which leadeth men to the font of wisdome," as this Elizabethan maintained; love is the new intelligence that raises men aloft, as Dante knew.

Since I have willed to stoutly ignore all that is not Beauty, I must create my Beatrice. Will not the vision serve of yesterday? To see is to love, and to love is to be wise, was Dante's creed. For name, the vision shall be known to me as Nephele, phantom-muse of my whilom verses. And as the lover must ever strain to raise himself to the imagined altitude of his Beatrice, so will I hold myself as if I were ever in

her presence, guarding my thoughts that they be "high-erected, and seated in a heart of courtesie," in Sir Philip's words. What if she be but a cloud-love? She is none the less Beatrice, none the less Laura. Nor shall she have cause to frown at any infidelity. No domestic Gemma, no Avignon light-of-love can be her rival. Such are the sweet uses and safeguards of adverse poverty. . . . "The lownesse and meannesse of my fortune and person forbids me to hope," sighed Algernon Sidney, grand-nephew of Sir Philip. But *il miser suole dar facile credenza a quel che vuole*, jests Ariosto. What if I take seriously his laughing irony! In virtue, then, of my meanness, I can the readier feign, and give credence to my feigning. *L'invisibil fa vedere Amore*, he laughs again. Yes, I gravely agree that it is the lover's privilege to behold a goddess confessed in a—very woman. I have transfigured a mere "young lady" into a Nephele whose presence in my heart shall be constant incentive to erect myself above myself.

The remedy of art.

The "new life" cannot wholly draw its source from the sense of beauty. Yet let me neither overvalue nor undervalue the deliverance vouchsafed by art. There is a time for all things; and I may well seek occasional refuge from this unintelligible world in the fair harmonious worlds that are realised by artists, on condition that I chafe not at the contrast on my return. More is life than art; more than the love of art and beauty is the love of man. The artist, the creator of harmony, is based on the man, as Novalis says, even as the statue is based on its pedestal. The artist, who is enabled to reveal to other men his visions

of Paradise, must yet bear himself as a man among men ; and therefore all the more should the artist who divines a Paradise in moments of exalted joy, but lacks the power of revelation, who forgets his misery a while in the contemplation of revealed paradises, proceed on his way rejoicing, not bewildered at his banishment, not gazing helplessly with lack-lustre eye on the sphere of his exile as a disorderly Inferno, but encouraged to behold in it a Purgatory, wherein adherence to all that is noble is an approximation to Paradise. For to side with the good is to know Beauty. . . . Long have I held, indeed, and I still can hold, that art is independent of ethics. Is it not the duty of the creative artist to fulfil his vocation ; may not the musician's cult or Beauty be wholly exclusive, and the painter's cult be almost wholly exclusive ; cannot the dramatist in prose or verse rightly leave his representations of human life, if they be true representations, to serve as object-lessons ? But other artists, in proportion as their art can influence human thought and action, are responsible. Moreover, the artist of whatever art is primarily a man, and the deficiencies of his work, setting workmanship aside, result from the deficiencies of his character. If rich in imagination, and poor in conscience, his imagination will be superficial. . . . I mean no more than this ; for me, since I am not blessed to be a creative artist, lotus-eating can be no permanent, satisfactory occupation, I must not prolong my sojourn in imaginary paradises, oblivious of time and honour. The world will not let me go free, or allow me to withdraw for long into the sanctuary of art, refusing all responsibility. The law of irony besets alike the artist and the lover of art. This

Ariosto is a supreme artist, but he is ever conscious of the contrast between the actual and his ideal world of art and harmony, must needs jest at the momentary forgetfulness of life and discord he has inspired in himself and his audience. The German Romanticists, eager to escape from oppressive actuality by picturing an ideal world, welcomed Schelling's theory that the reconciliation of nature and spirit, necessity and freedom, could only be effected in works of art (Beauty is imaginary unity, said Kant before them), but Solger, completing the theory, showed that irony was the fundamental principle—and solvent—of artistic idealism. The world is what it is ; the finite is necessarily imperfect ; nature denies permanency to beauty of thought and art. Heine, revolting from the actual, denies it, and creates a world of beauty ; but, conscious that his imaginary world is merely imaginary, he jests at his own creation, even as he jests at Nature's creation. In a word, art is not life ; and to love art too well is to hate life unduly.

The remedy of humour.

Art, ideal art, is not the whole of art, still less of life. He who embraces life under all its aspects beholds in man the artist, the home-sick feigner of imaginary paradises, but also the sorrowful, courageous struggler. Like irony, humour is a solvent of that ideal art, that ideal life, expressed with more or less completeness by others, vaguely divined in my own reveries, for which I have hitherto solely cared. The humorist is one who looks on life as a tragi-comedy. He knows that, under the conditions of human existence, the highest thought and the highest endeavour, the most ardent desire for truth, and the most strenuous

energy, are tragic, since they must fail of completeness ; are comic, in their contrast with ideal completeness. He knows that even those who cherish mediocrity, who endeavour to make life an art of calculation, offer a tragi-comic spectacle to the humorous, objective artist, to the disinterested observer. Let me cultivate the faculty of humour, if indeed I possess it in potentiality, not only that I may find consolation for my own sorrows, that my "misery" may "make sport to mock itself," but that my sympathy and tolerance may be strengthened. He that is humorous has "right opinion," and avoids instinctively excess of earnestness, which is fanaticism, and excess of sensibility, which is sentimentality. But let me remember that humour should not be merely playful acceptance of that which is. Right humour is based on the serious conviction of the beauty and truth of goodness,—though the finite be not the infinite.

The same, continued.

But shall I readily reconcile, in myself, the humorist with the artist, and the artist with the man of action—the drudge? I must not rigidly divide, as heretofore, my life into hours of arid toil, stoically endured, and hours of leisure, lapsing in music and disinterested, Epicurean contemplation. I must not be hopeless of unity. The complete artist should be poetical, and he who endeavours to make of his life a poem should not so much strive to ignore that portion of his life which allows no ready perception of the beautiful which perchance may lurk in it, as strive to regard it under its poetical aspect. Since the universal is implicit in the particular, I must make shift to discover the All in the One, to regard my drudgery as

representative, symbolical. It is the performance of duty, and the manner of performance, not the rank of the performance, that imports; the dignity of toil is not lessened by the specific meanness of the toil. . . . But I fear that I am not to be wholly satisfied with bravery of words, with seeming nobility of sentiment; I fear that such transcendentalism rings hollow. Must I not call the humorist to the aid of the poet-artist? Thus, I should remember that, in the hours of contemplation, I can be other than I am, I can be all men in turn, only on condition of being, in the hours of action, what I must be, on condition of being persistently one. The humorist, again, cognisant of the laws of contrast and alternation, will preserve the artist from idle regret that his life cannot be wholly Epicurean, by his ever-renewed warning that intellectual pleasure cannot be truly enjoyed except as the reward of task-work duly accomplished. And the humorist will slay with Apolline "kindly darts" the sentimentalist within me. For is not the sentimentalist one who, revolting from the actual, seeks to live in a chimerical world, thereby exposing himself to endless suffering and countless disillusion, since the actual world will not fail to give the constant lie to his cherished dreams? And might not such a sentimentalist degenerate, and ultimately side with those who, elevating impressibility into a virtue, trusting solely to their instincts and emotions for guidance, abhorring, if not shirking, duty, unless it presents itself in a flattering, emotional form, find ready excuse for their deficiencies of practice and their omissions of plain duties in the conviction of the excellence of their hearts and intentions?

But the meanness, the meanness of my toil and

station! Not that men's disregard need surprise or afflict; but that the resulting, inevitable poverty will deprive the contemplative artist of desired materials. Yet let the artist see that he use to the full such material as he already possesses; and let the man of action, the drudge, with the aid of the humorist, remember that though his own task-work, nay, "all human affairs," to use Plato's words, "are hardly worth considering in earnest, yet must we be in earnest about them, for a sad necessity constrains us." Sad? Though the humorist be a laughing and a weeping philosopher in one, laughing that he may not weep, and weeping lest laughter turn to bitterness, I will hide my tears even from myself, and mitigate my laughter to a secret smile.

The remedy of pride.

Should the old despondency revisit me, should humour fail to ward off its visitation, I must doubtless fall back on pride in the last resort. The unfortunate, believing that he merits a fairer lot, finds consolation in such belief. La Rochefoucauld would find his account in such a sentiment, and declare that "we often console our unhappiness by a certain pleasure we find in appearing unhappy." But my pride was, and shall be, wholly hidden; nay, I will be too proud to confess my unhappiness to myself. The Duc de la Rochefoucauld must yield precedence to Sir Thomas Browne: "if our merits be above our stations, if our intrinsical value be greater than we go for, or our value than our valuation, and if we stand higher in God's than in the censor's book, it may make some equitable balance in the inequalities of the world." . . . Should I dally with my old fancy that I am a

"whipping boy" for some favourite of fortune, that, in the compensatory economy of things, I fall short that another may excel? If only he who is a gainer by my loss were—my friend! But I am used to loneliness, and can only smile at this mystic solution of the problem of inequality. . . . Yet why am I proud, and why do I find consolation in pride? Since I freely confess to myself that I cannot, could not even with changed circumstances, be that which I fain would be, how can I deem that I merit a fairer lot? I can only deserve by being patient, gentle, silent—save when I can aid by kindly words. If I persist in such well-being I shall deserve, and be justified in my humble pride, able perchance to find satisfaction in deserving without enjoying. Indeed, were I to be circumstanced as my wandering, idle desires would have me circumstanced, should I not be exposed to the poignant sense that I was beneath, unworthy of my fortune?

Despondency; and renewed courage.

Do what I will, strive as I may to constantly discover the ideal in the real, to be that always which I am sometimes, my life will yet be no orderly, harmonious whole. The task of the creative artist is simpler far; in representing life, he eliminates all hampering, discordant elements; he orders and harmonises at will. But life is complex, and its complexity is not to be simplified. The beautiful is symbolical of the good; akin to, and yet other than the good. Grace, it may be, is the link between them. Grace is beauty in action; there are "fair souls," doubtless, who are constantly inspired, constantly under the influence of "the dæmonic," who move and speak and act as though to the sound of

music, who radiate sunshine, however they be circumstanced. Imagination and understanding with them are ever in proportion; not, as with others, occasionally, seldom; true artists, they constantly behold harmony in all things because they are harmonious themselves. Can such lovely simplicity be gained by desire and resolution and effort? Is it not even as the poet's imagination, given from the first; not to be merited, not to be acquired by resolution? Yet to love beauty is to love love, for beauty is love visible. And to love love is to be kind and pitiful. "'Fair, kind, and true' is all my argument." If kind and true of heart, then shall I be also fair.

The fear of selfishness.

That I may continue in calm this reconstruction of my life, I must exorcise once and for all the lurking, troublous doubt that not only the basis but the whole superstructure is—selfishness. Must we not "persevere in our essence"; and is not the essence of lofty character self-respect? The "happy warrior" obeys the call of duty, but it is he himself who issues the order he obeys. If he recognises duties to others, it is because he recognises that such duties are duties he owes to himself; if he embraces self-sacrifice, it is because self-sacrifice is supreme self-satisfaction. I will not be dismayed by La Rochefoucauld, for he effects his generalisation of selfishness by sophistries of omission, omission of the lofty intellectual egoism of self-sacrifice, and the spontaneous impulses of the heart towards self-sacrifice—which latter form, precisely because instinctive, is less meritorious than the self-sacrifice that proceeds from calculated self-interest. . . . Nay, am I not also sophistical in turn, discounting

self-sacrifice that I may plausibly console myself for my inability, born of circumstance and temperament, to forget myself? But at least I will desire and strive to be a rational citizen of the ideal Commonwealth. . . . With the very gaoler of Imogen's Posthumus "I would that we were all of one mind, and that mind good." The diversity of hearts is manifest; yet resignation, self-love, active benevolence, obedience to law imposed from within or without, mystic love, faith, are but so many aspects of goodness appropriate to different visions. Resignation, cheerful if it may be; the self-love that is the timid yet ardent desire of perfection,—I cannot be altogether base if I cherish these.

The posing of insoluble problems.

In the coming days and years I could not, and should not, wholly disregard in the interests of my serenity those problems which are insoluble, and yet inevitable. The posing of them is self-dedication to pain, but yet to honour; not to be haunted by divine questionings is to fail in human dignity. Let me recognise once and for all with Kant that the sphere of knowledge is bounded by experience, that the verification of faith in ideals is impossible, and yet that transcendent faith is necessary and legitimate. So shall I not unduly despond because proffered solutions are ever inadequate; so shall doubt fail to wound me, armed with the certainty that my trust—how shall I express it in words?—my trust that Love is lord of all, if it is not capable of proof, is yet also incapable of disproof. Such trust is teleological, and the opposite of teleology is mechanism, and opposites are irreconcilable. Be it so. I cannot reconcile a single pair of opposites, of antinomies, ethical, political, metaphysical; I cannot

side exclusively with love or justice, civilisation or industry, spirit or nature, freedom or law, immanency or transcendency, nor yet synthesise them. I have vainly pursued unity, individual, universal. The supreme, ineffable Unity? I know full well the countless difficulties that immediately ensue from the thesis that God is, or the thesis that God is not; I know full well that the various aspects of the One involve contradictions. I recognise that the conception of an Ideal of beauty, love, reason, as efficient and final cause of the real is a possible conception, but that the conception of an ideal does not necessarily imply the reality of this ideal, or that this ideal is the cause and end of reality. I admit that an abstraction is a mere abstraction, that the Absolute, if it is pure indifference, is pure emptiness; that if it is determined by attributes, it is no longer absolute, that if it is other than nature and humanity it is a mere algebraical *x*, that if it includes or is the cause of nature and humanity, it includes or is the cause of evil. Jehovah, or the Moral Order, or Nature (*Deus sive Natura*), or Necessity, or the Unknowable, or the Unconscious Absolute—. . . . Nay, reason is bounded by experience, and faith becomes necessary when reason fails. We cannot think otherwise than we do think; we cannot believe otherwise than we do believe. And there are infinite degrees of belief; the belief of each believer is, as his personality, unique. Moreover, non-belief is impossible; suspension of judgment is incompatible with action, and moral action is truest thought. We cannot comprehend rational unity, we cannot know the unknowable; but we can, and must, be men of good will. Positivists, Agnostics, Gnostics, each duly insists on elements of truth neglected by his

brethren, each and all are Knights of the Spirit ; they reason, and therefore differ one from another, but each and all acknowledge and reverence the supreme beauty of moral goodness. . . . So, with Menander, let me "revere, and be not curious about God" ; so, with Philemon, let me "have faith in God." Let me, with Spinoza, recognise in Reason the mediator between selfishness and altruism, but let me regard reason under its aspect of love ; let me hold, with Dante, that Love is wisdom, that Love the Mediator can effect the reconciliation between thought and act.

Renewed despondency.

I have let a long week of days and nights speed by with never an added word to these last. I bore my new-found joy through the sunlit meadows and woods, and boldly matched it with the gladsome brooks and golden autumn flowers, exulting to find them not more vocal, not more radiant. Unfaltering and undismayed, I marked the falling leaves and myriad signs of coming winter, and visited my wonted stations in gloomy hours of cold rain and pitiless wind. Nay, I wandered out into the twilight and darkness, challenging myself to remember that with Nature's year my year of liberty would die, summoning the most unlovely images of future penury and privation, of arid toil and necessary loneliness ; and yet serenity did not fail, nor joy withdraw in troubled fear.

. . . But is not my new-found joy almost wholly unreasonable ? Reverting to these latest pages, how can I discover in them adequate cause for this present —or, must I write, recent ?—joy, and not rather and only cause for wonder, cause for doubt that it can result from such trivial eclecticism, such fallacious juggling

with words? Should I not attribute my present, or recent, joy to mere bodily well-being? The Epicurean, obeying his master, would "dwell in the country"; and the "happy, garden state" has been mine despite my agony of thought. . . . Is not this temple of the "new life" based on shifting sands? Will it endure the hurtling shock of ever-renewed storms? In what is the plan of it worthy of selection, and of execution? How could this plan bear criticism? Criticism! What reconciliation of opposites have I effected? Can I cease to affirm and deny my affirmation? Can I cease to distrust affirmation and distrust denial? Will not the war between my heart and head continue to the end? . . . But whence, again, this new despondency? Should I not attribute it with better reason to bodily causes than this my recent joy? A cold contracted, a passing chill, perchance? May I not, must I not hold that joy is but eclipsed for the moment? Let me await in silence its new coming. In the days of liberty that yet remain to me shall I not press on, with the greater ardour that I have paused awhile, towards the completion of my Temple of Life? Bœthius, noble man of action and contemplation, writing in his latest prison-days a *De Consolatione Philosophiæ*, set forth prolegomena of Theistic Stoicism, and promised to himself a Christian continuation and conclusion of the whole matter. But death stayed his hand. . . . Or were it not better to rest content with my clear-obscure of faith? Faith is tongue-tied, and doubt is eloquent. I am more than my doubts; and haply the silence of faith is more than eloquence. They that are happy have no expression for their happiness, shrink from its expression; "their own hearts know it best." I have

loved wisdom, but wisdom has failed and would fail me; let my sole wisdom be the wisdom of love, let me trust that there is unity behind and in difference, that there is some reconciliation of virtue and happiness, that Love is Lord of All. . . . Nay, I cannot write to-night, I will write no more to-night.[1]

[1] The "passing chill" proved fatal, and no more was written.—EDITOR.]

THE END

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